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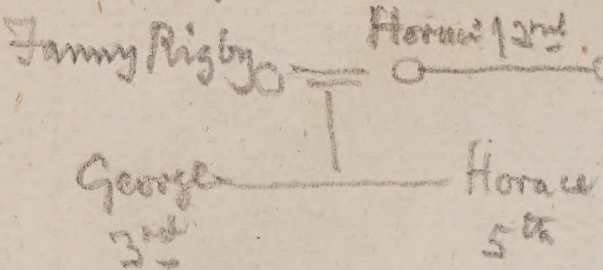
FAMILIAR LETTERS

FROM

ITALY.

Peter Beckford of Stapleton Co. Dorset
m. 1773 Hon. Louisa Pitt. She d. 1791



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FAMILIAR LETTERS FROM ITALY, TO A FRIEND IN ENGLAND.

BY PETER BECKFORD, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

"VADE, SED INCULTUS."
OVID.

Salisbury:
PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. EASTON:
SOLD ALSO BY
J. HATCHARD, J. GINGER, PICCADILLY;
HORNAVILLE AND FELL, NEW BOND-STREET;
CADELL AND DAVIES, PAYNE AND MACKINLAY,
STRAND;
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LONDON.

1805.

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PREFACE.

MANY of the following LETTERS were written in the year 1787; most of them before the Invasion of Italy by the French. The many changes that have happened since that time, may, in some measure, render these LETTERS useless; but, as they will serve to shew what ITALY then was, they are offered by the AUTHOR, with the greatest humility, to the Candor of the Public.

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FAMILIAR LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Pisa, Jan. 5, 1787.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOU desire an account of my Travels,—I fear it will not be the most agreeable part of our correspondence,—I foresee many difficulties.—I am well aware that it is not an easy task for a stranger to judge of the character and genius, customs and manners of a country through which he passes, yet as it is a task that properly belongs to a Traveller, I flatter myself that you, who are acquainted with the difficulty, will not withhold your indulgence. It may be also difficult to describe faithfully and not offend; yet that apprehension, unpleasant as it may be, shall in no instance induce me to disguise the truth. To those very discreet persons who think that truth is not always to be spoken, I shall reply, that the truth *is* always to be spoken whenever a Gentleman speaks. It is your business to re-

member that in all general descriptions many exceptions are to be made. Nor is it the least unpleasant part of this undertaking to think that I shall frequently tell you what you already know. Local descriptions cannot vary much. We all draw our knowledge from the same source, read the same books, and visit the same objects. Every thing curious in Italy has been described again and again; but many things I may probably see in a different light from others, and describe in a different manner. Besides, Travellers not only see things in different lights, but relate them in different humours. Compare PIOZZI with SMOLLET; BARETTI with SHARPE; and you will be at a loss what opinion to form of a country of which they all treat so differently. As for BARETTI, you must read him with the same caution you use when you deal with his countrymen. Like them he concludes that you will not believe all that is said; that a reduction is to be made; and he makes his account accordingly. I will examine with care, relate with fidelity, and keep as near the truth as I can. ROUSSEAU says, "I have passed my life in reading the accounts that Travellers give, and have not met with two that have given me the same idea of the same people."

When we consider travelling under its several motives of education, pleasure, health, and economy,

nomy, it becomes an object of such importance, that we need not wonder if so many Writers both male and female, have thought it worthy their attention. They have given us many an useful lesson; and by describing, though faintly, the sights that afforded them pleasure, enable us to follow them in their excursions without either expence or trouble. I shall avail myself of their labours.—La Lande's Account of Italy is now upon my table; I will read it with attention, and shall follow that gentleman, or any other who has written on this subject, with as little scruple as any ancient poet, or modern traveller whatever.* But I will not blindly follow, nor adopt their opinions when contrary to my own. If I should mention Dionysius, Polybius, or any other Greek author, as probably I may, do not fancy that I read Greek. I have contented myself with an English translation, and advise you to do the same. As I have read more for amusement than improvement, I have trusted too much to memory. Favourite passages that I have transcribed from books, are not only incorrect, but

* Virgil is said to have copied Homer, in near a thousand places—Terence has been called *dimidiate Menandre*—and Writers of Travels, from the time of Misson to the present day, have invariably copied one from another.

unaccompanied often with the names of the authors, and sometimes even with the references to them. I derive one pleasure, however, from a bad memory:—Shakespeare and the Spectator, Don Quixotte and Gil Blas, after a year or two, become as new to me, and are read with as much pleasure as they were at first. If your memory be equally bad, take notes of what you read.—The best method, without doubt, is to carry the knowledge you acquire in your head; but if that be a lost hope, the next best is to carry it in your pocket.

An historical account of the places through which I pass, of course, you will not expect: a general description I shall not omit, and may afterwards refer you to those useful books which are written as Guides to strangers, and are to be found in every town where the curiosities deserve remark. I shall endeavour to be candid in my observations, and not ill-tempered in my reflections; yet I shall speak with the freedom of my country, nor compliment even Princes at the expence of truth. I shall say little of the government of any town, yet enough to answer the purpose of a traveller, who does not mean to become an inhabitant. In some states, and one in particular, the laws and regulations are so continually varying, that my pen would not keep pace with the caprice of the Sovereign.

Though

Though I may speak of the state of literature, I shall decline mentioning the learned men, that I may offend none of them. Poor ADDISON is accused by a lady of unkindness and injustice when he speaks of the literature of Milan. I dare say he spoke as he found it.

To judge of the character of a people we must see them familiarly, and without reserve; we must have the *tact* of reconciling seeming contradictions, and of discovering truth through the cloud that surrounds it. Private characters for this reason are difficult to be understood; but general characters, if found from observation to be just, may without scruple be discussed. I shall betray no confidence, nor relate any anecdote that is not generally known, and publicly talked of. One author * has already shewn how difficult it is to write on the customs and manners of any country, and not find fault. He took up his pen to correct this defect in another, at the same time that he has abused Piemont, the country that gave him birth, more than the Englishman whose malignity he condemns.

It is said that Travellers will lie:—They must lie, if every trifling mistake is to be deemed a falsehood. Some from ignorance inform you wrong; some will purposely deceive you. I

* BARETTI.

shall

shall describe things as I find them, nor be answerable for the changes that time, or caprice may make. When on the subject of economy, I shall mention what I pay myself; prices of course will vary, and you must make the best bargain you can. I shall not send you a regular account of churches and palaces; it would be tiresome to us both: nor shall I pretend to describe pictures, which to be admired must be seen. Whatever I think necessary I shall not omit, as I am conscious the trifle I am now offering you would be useless if I did. Pay no attention to the dates of my Letters, since several visits made at different seasons to the same place, may, to save trouble to us both, be made the subject of one letter.

My old friend, STERNE, has ludicrously described several kinds of Travellers:—as I know not under which of these you intend to be classed, I shall endeavour that the hints I give may be of service to all:—to amuse you if you please—to inform you if I can—and to start now and then a subject interesting to us both, will be the endeavour of the following Letters. Suffer me, however, to ride my hobby as I like; you are at liberty to get up behind me if you think fit, and may get down when you will; I only beg that I may be permitted to continue my morning's ride as long as I find it agreeable. I am

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in a dull place, and hate to be idle.—I write partly to inform you, and partly to employ myself. It is probable, therefore, that I shall take a larger latitude than Writers of Travels usually allow themselves, and not strictly confine myself to the dull narrative which they have rendered unnecessary. I foresee that my Letters will be a *pasticcio*, a mere *hotch potch*, and will partake more of the extravagance of MONTAIGNE, than of the elegance of PLINY. No matter:—If they prevent me at any time from doing worse, or afford a transitory amusement to you, when you have nothing to do, I shall not have been ill employed.—I shall prefer it to sauntering in a coffee-house, or to standing upon a bridge, and spitting into the stream that runs beneath.

LETTER II.

YOUR letter, in answer to mine of the fifth of January, is very consolatory. You accept the conditions; promise me your indulgence, and I shall proceed. You tell me also that you mean to follow my steps shortly: it is a pleasure to think that, in some degree at least, I shall clear the way for you.

It would be needless to say much to recommend travelling, which has so many advantages attending it. Splenetic gentlemen, by change of place, may *chasser leur ennui;* those of an active mind satisfy their curiosity; the distressed live as well as their neighbours; and the magnificent make a figure both in France and Italy with little money. The philosopher will find that mankind are equally slaves to their passions every where, and may also see with pleasure, as a Prince of Persia did before him, that they die even in Rome as in other places.* But what is more

* When CONSTANTINE asked the brother of the King of Persia, "What pleased him most at Rome?" he replied, "That nothing pleased him so well as to see that men died there as they did in other places."

to our purpose, an Englishman will learn from a knowledge of other countries to set a proper value on his own. Ulysses, the wisest among the Greeks, is described as one who had travelled much. The Romans considered travelling as a necessary part of education. Their youth visited Greece as we visit Italy; though I believe with more advantage. It is not in looking at pictures and statues only, that travelling is of use, but in examining the laws, customs, and manners of other countries, and comparing them with our own. Agriculture, Natural History, Trade, Commerce, Arts, and Sciences, all present themselves under various forms to improve and enlarge the understanding; while a continual habit of receiving favors will put us in good-humour with the rest of the world, remove our prejudices, increase our sensibility, and inspire in us that general benevolence which renders mankind so serviceable to one another. Partiality is warrantable to a certain degree only—relations, friends, acquaintance, countrymen, *cæteris paribus*, are entitled to a preference; but as a citizen of the world, I cannot subscribe to it to the extent it is often carried. I know nothing that removes local prejudices so much as travelling. Mankind are nearly the same in all countries, and you learn to esteem merit whereever you find it.

Useful as I have been taught to consider travelling, I am surprised to hear it represented as prejudicial to morality. Do you think it more so than a fashionable London life? What vices is a young man likely to contract abroad, that he cannot find at home; and I beg leave to ask, if he cannot injure his health, and ruin his fortune as effectually in London, as in any other part of the world? They are much mistaken who think he is to be taught foppery in France, drinking in Germany, gallantry in Italy, or gambling any where. It is true, many travel too young; were they better acquainted with their own laws, customs, and manners, they would receive greater advantage in comparing them with those of other countries. CICERO was near thirty when he travelled into Greece, at which age it is probable he was perfectly acquainted with Rome, and had already laid the foundation of that knowledge which rendered him so famous afterwards.—Other examples are not wanting:—LYCURGUS, and PETER THE GREAT, men of exalted genius, to whom their country owed all its splendour, were travellers before they were legislators. I have seen many of my countrymen inquisitive from routine after every trifle on the Continent, and less acquainted with the curiosities of London than an Italian, who could tell them even more of Westminster Abbey, the Tower, Saint Paul's,

Paul's, and the Monument, than they knew before.—*Apropos* to the latter:—You probably have never heard that a Preacher of that time exclaiming againt Intemperance, declared the fire of London to have been evidently a judgment on the *gluttony* of the citizens, since, it began in *Pudding*-lane, and ended in *Pye*-corner.

It is thought not without reason that the English are bad travellers; that we are discontented with every thing, and determined to find nothing good or agreeable out of our own country. A Frenchman makes up his mind to every inconvenience; his room, his dinner, his bed, nothing comes amiss to him, while many whom we know are never pleased but where they are not—are to be contented only with what they cannot get—and absurdly expect all their English comforts in an Italian inn.

Before you set out on your journey you will of course provide every thing necessary: you should at the same time consider what is, and what is not necessary. GRAY says: "*Eme quodcunque emendum est;* not only pictures, medals, gems, drawings, &c.; but cloaths, stockings, shoes, handkerchiefs, little moveables, every thing you may want all your life long." This would be better advice from GRAY the *cutler*, than GRAY the poet. I am now as studious

dious to lessen incumbrances, as I once was to increase them; and instead of loading myself with cloaths, &c. that I do not want, readily give away all that I can do without; and may expect to become an excellent Traveller by the time I leave off travelling.

If you travel for improvement, observe the customs, manners, and dispositions of the people, —study the laws, police, and the characters of those that govern,—adapt your questions to the capacity of those with whom you converse, and you will seldom meet with any one from whom some useful information may not be obtained; even the very mysteries of government will become as familiar to you as the customs and manners of the people. You will enquire if population increases—if commerce improves—if the arts flourish—if the taxes are judiciously laid, and the revenues of the state carefully expended —if the system of government be such as conciliates the affections of the people—if that government be firm, and able to controul the guilty, secure the person and property of the subject from insult, and make itself respected— if the laws are concise, and easily understood; if they are equally administered?—You will at the same time consider their stability as a proof of their goodness, or suspect the propriety of alterations that you see continually altering.—

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You will observe if civil causes are decided expeditiously and impartially ; and if criminals are tried fairly and mercifully, as we ourselves hope to be tried.

In public edifices you will look for taste and elegance, and in every public institution you will examine how far the end answers the intention.

In the Sovereign you will expect grandeur and magnificence without waste or profusion—judicious mercy and punishments adapted to their crimes—you will observe if he be indulgent or severe ; and if he set the example of virtue which he wishes his subjects to follow ; if his principles of governing be just, and if his actions agree always with his principles ; in one word, if he prefers the happiness and prosperity of his people, to his own personal interest or glory.

You will observe the state of religion, education, and morals—will enquire if the Clergy do their duty, as well by example as precept ; if fathers provide proper teachers for their children without regard to expence or trouble ; and if virtue be generally esteemed, and vice discouraged.—You will also remark if the Noblesse be generous and humane ; the people industrious, frugal, and contented. These are useful enquiries ; and if a Traveller can but leave all national pre-

prejudice behind him, he will receive no small advantage by thus comparing other countries with his own.

In time of war, when you have obtained a passport, read it:—for want of that precaution at Brussels, I found myself in a ridiculous situation at the gates of Luxembourgh. The name of my companion was inserted, but by some mistake or other, I was called the *Chevalier de York!* That gentleman was then expected at Luxembourgh, on his way to the Congress at Ausburg, and the Deputy Governor (the Governor was in the country) as soon as he heard of his Excellency's arrival, came to pay him his respects. He insisted on shewing the *Chevalier York* the fortifications, mines, &c., which he assured me at the same time no *less* a personage could be permitted to see: and the *Chevalier York*, after expressing his thanks, and secretly wishing this officious gentleman at the Devil a thousand times for his courtesy, returned to his inn, in no little hurry, lest he should be discovered, and hung up as a spy.

Travel by night as little as you can help; accidents at that time are most likely to happen, and are least easy to remedy. A moon I know is a great temptation to those who are in haste, and though I cannot agree with our friend Carraccioli, *that the moon in Italy is as warm*

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as the sun in England, yet it is certainly a *better* moon than ours, and an English Traveller may be astonished at the light it gives. Accept the friendly assistance which the moon offers, and when there is none, rather set out before day, than travel after. Inquire at what hour they shut the gates at every capital town you have occasion to pass, and never run it too near for fear of accidents. Never, on any pretence whatever, suffer them to put more horses to your carriage than the tariff allows; it generally occasions disputes, and sometimes obliges you to continue the same number to the end of your journey. Travelling, in my younger days, through Germany, and arriving with four horses only, I opposed for some time the addition of two, that the Postmaster was employing all his rhetoric to persuade me to take: I insisted on seeing the tariff. The tariff was in my favor; and yet, like a great fool (the road being bad), I let him carry his point, on giving me a letter to his friend at the next post, confirming my arrival with four horses only. The letter was written in German, what it contained I know not; but I conclude it said that I was a very silly fellow, for the postmaster, without further ceremony, put *six* horses to my carriage, but politely offered me a *similar* letter to his friend at the next post, if I chose to accept it.

Avoid disputes with postmasters and postillions; you lose time, lose your temper, and gain nothing. I went twice at Poggibonsi to the Podestá,* to complain of the postmaster, but got no redress. It taught me patience. In Tuscany, where the regulations contradict each other, you cannot always avoid disputes:—by one order, they cannot refuse you four horses, if you arrive with no more: by another, if your baggage exceed three hundred pounds, they can oblige you to take six. In France the post is better regulated, the orders are clear, and admit of no dispute.

Were the Italian inns less insufferable, I would encounter all the tediousness of a Vetturino, rather than submit to the impertinence of the postmasters, and the brutality of the postillions. The latter are the most worthless fellows in Italy, and yet the only way to get quickly and safely out of their hands is to pay them well, and treat them civilly.

Stop as little as possible at the inns; at all you must expect to be imposed upon:—you may assure yourself, if you travel in the winter, that you will find no place so comfortable as your

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* The Podestá is the magistrate for all civil concerns.

own carriage. A Frenchman puts on his night-cap, and gets into his chaise, as he gets into his bed; and when hungry, usually contents himself with the provisions he carries along with him. Some good wine, and a cold pye in the well of your carriage, with the addition of a fresh egg, which is both clean and wholesome, will save you from a bad dinner, and the inconvenience of waiting for it. Let your supper be your principal meal. Where you intend to sleep make your bargain before you leave your carriage, and if you find them exorbitant in their demands, drive on: if you are firm, they will be reasonable.—Bespeak your horses as soon as you arrive:—pay handsomely on the road that you may be well served, and at the gates to avoid trouble.—There is no fixed rule for these expences.—They always depend on the figure you make, and what you are thought able to pay:—a courier with lace on his jacket, will be expected to pay more than one without. For *comforts*, I should recommend an English inn; they are in general cleaner, and the eating more in the style to which you have been accustomed; but, impartiality obliges me to add, that the traveller who travels out of *economy* must never enter them.

Monsieur DUTENS and Mr. MARTYN have rendered any further direction unnecessary;

make *you* your provision of patience and resignation. If your bed be bad, leave it the sooner; if the bread be heavy, make light of it: neither lose time unnecessarily on the road, nor hurry where you have any thing to see. One Gentleman, to *save time*, saw all the curiosities of Rome in a few days, in a post-chaise and four! Another passed through Lyons without seeing it at all: he however said, "it was a nasty town," and being asked, "what stay he made there?" replied, "*I arrived late at night; and, I thank God, set out again early the next morning.*"

LETTER III.

REMEMBER to pass the Alps early in the autumn, before the first snows fall. I was unluckily a week too late. If you wish to avoid the heats of Italy, it is in Switzerland you should pass the summer. Though I may be thought a partial judge of the beauties of a country, where I remained three years, intending at my arrival to stay three days only. As Geneva during all that time was my head-quarters, of course you will expect some description of it. The town is about two miles in circumference, pleasantly situated, partly in Savoy, and partly in Switzerland, at the western extremity of one of the most beautiful lakes in Europe. It is of ancient date, was not unknown in the early days of Rome, and has since undergone a variety of revolutions. It was once united to the German Empire, under the successors of Charlemagne. After that, the Bishops of Geneva obtained the supreme authority in opposition to the Counts,

and exercised an unbecoming tyranny, till the reformation in the year 1535, under the direction of Calvin, put an end to their pretensions.* In 1602, their neighbour, Charles Emanuel Duke of Savoy, though then at peace with the Republic, made a treacherous attempt to take the town by surprise. He approached in silence, darkness favoured him, and by means of scaling ladders which he fixed to the walls, many of his soldiers had already mounted the ramparts before they were discovered. Luckily he failed in the attempt. The principal ringleaders were treated as they deserved, and the anniversary of this piece of rascality, if I may be allowed the expression, has been observed till lately at Geneva, as a joyful festival. To make my peace with Sovereignty, I will now relate an anecdote as honourable as that was disgraceful: —When the same Charles Emanuel entered France to confer with Henry IV. concerning some matters in dispute between them, the King was advised to seize on the person of the Duke till those differences were settled. The gallant Monarch replied, " *That he would ra–*

* The Bishop still retains the title, and resides at Annecy in Savoy; but Calvin applied the overplus of the benefices which pampered his luxury, and that of his dependants, to found an hospital, college, and academy.

ther

ther lose his crown, than betray the confidence reposed in him, even by an enemy."

In 1754 the King of Sardinia by a solemn act acknowledged the independence of that Republic. Of late years the aristocratical and democratical parties have been constantly at variance ; the most opulent families have obtained an almost exclusive jurisdiction, and the Court of France, in the time of the Duke de Choiseul, cruelly interfered in favor of a party already too powerful for the liberties of the people.

You have heard much of the excellence of the Geneva Government :—It is composed of Le Petit Conseil of twenty-five members, Le Grand Conseil des deux cens, and Le Conseil General. The Grand Conseil never assembles without the Petit Conseil, nor can any thing be proposed to the former till it has been approved by the latter, though they are at liberty to reject it afterwards. The Conseil General is the assembly of the Bourgeoise, where each has a vote, and it is by them the magistrates are chosen. The Sovereignty is in the Conseil General : they declare war, and make peace ; but can only debate on that which is proposed to them by the Grand Conseil, who determine all other matters both civil and criminal. The essential difference between a Citizen and a Bourgeois is,

that

that the latter cannot be elected to any office, though they are members of the Sovereign Council as well as the citizens. Those who are natives only cannot keep a shop, or serve in the troops; and pay a certain sum before they can exercise any profession. They are, however, admitted to the bourgeoisie at a lower price than those who are inhabitants only.

The principal magistrates are called Syndics: there are four of them. The office is for one year only, nor can they be re-chosen till three years after. The Procureur General is another magistrate of great consideration, for besides his office of attorney general, the rights of the people, the maintenance of the constitution, and submission to the laws, are particularly confided to him. The revenue was, one year with another, about six hundred thousand French livres; a small sum, but equal to the ordinary expences of the state.—The riches of the inhabitants is the treasury of the Republic.

Many of the Geneva laws are excellent; but so many years have elapsed since my acquaintance with them, they are almost all forgotten. Some of their domestic regulations are just and prudent. A father may dispose as he pleases of half his estate, leaving the other half to be divided equally among his children; nor can they hold any office under government unless they

pay

pay their proportion of their father's debts. If a husband does not mention his wife in his will, she is entitled to her dower only; and if that should be insufficient, she is allowed a pension during her widowhood out of the estate. It is not permitted a man of sixty years of age to marry a woman under forty; nor a woman to marry a man more than ten years younger than herself.—As to the former, I do not know that either of them has any necessity to marry at all. Divorces are, perhaps, too easily obtained:—when the affair is agreed upon between the parties, the wife absents herself from her husband—he publicly demands her, and if she does not appear in a given time, a divorce is immediately granted. This, you will allow, is very accommodating, but I cannot persuade myself that the accommodation of individuals in this easy manner is an advantage to the state.

The Consistoire is a spiritual court, under the direction of the Petit Conseil. The morals of the people are under the particular inspection of the Clergy.—These have twelve hundred French livres a year allowed them: they undergo a strict examination to entitle them to it, not only in theology, but in general knowledge and morality. They visit the sick, comfort the afflicted, assist the widow and the orphan, procure pecuniary relief for the poor who want it, reprove such

such of the inhabitants as lead dissolute lives, and reconcile such as are at variance. Four times a year their own conduct is enquired into by the Consistoire, and those are censured who have neglected any of these important duties.—The Consistoire sets a good example to our Bishops, and the Geneva Pastors to our English Clergy.

The University in my time was on a respectable footing, and among the Professors were many eminent men in all the sciences. The academic exercises were in high repute, and *les usages du monde* so necessary to accomplish a gentleman, which are only to be acquired in good company, and in which our own Universities are so very deficient, were not wanting; and what was not less essential to young Englishmen, the company they frequented had sentiments of religion and liberty, congenial to their own.

A small state like this is to be governed like a well-regulated family; the authority like that of a father, the submission like that of a son: but I fear the Republic, since my time, has undergone many material changes:—frequent struggles for liberty, by exposing her natural weakness, have deprived her at last of the little she had; and an introduction of French customs has given a finishing stroke to that purity of manners which

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is essentially necessary to the very existence of a Republic.

The Lake of Geneva, one of the greatest beauties of Switzerland, is about fifty miles in length, and in the widest part near nine miles over: the water never freezes, and is higher in summer than in winter, owing to the melting of the snow on the neighbouring mountains. The rapid Rhone runs through it; at Lyons it forms its junction with the gentle Soane, and you will observe with what a prudish reluctance she meets his vigorous embrace. It is on this lake the Grib are caught, a bird somewhat resembling a Dab-Chick: they are caught in the months of December and January, when the weather is perfectly calm. The watermen row after them; the birds continue diving till their strength is exhausted, and are afterwards easily taken. Of the feathers of the breast, which is remarkably white and soft, are made muffs and tippets. The trout of the lake are famous:—QUIN might have liked them as well as a John Dory; at any rate, he would have liked the size better.—I eat of one that weighed thirty-two pounds, eighteen ounces to the pound, Geneva weight. The villas that surround this charming lake are delightful. The wine, called *vin de la Côte*, is excellent:—in short, I cannot conceive a more pleasant summer residence.

A com-

A commodious port on the lake, and a lucky situation betwixt Germany, France, and Italy, are great advantages to commerce, and encourage the industry of the people. In my time, Geneva was more flourishing than Berne—though a little spot, contained more inhabitants; and those were more rich, more commercial, and more industrious. The principal trade of the town is that of watches:—they had not less than two thousand watch-makers, who were supposed to give bread to near eight thousand people. The worst trade was that of a lawyer:—law-suits were generally made up by the friends of the parties, and sometimes (believe it if you can) by the lawyers themselves.*

The fortifications are more neat than strong, and the daily guard consists of one hundred and fifty men only. The buildings, as well as I can recollect, have no extraordinary elegance. The library contains some valuable manuscripts. The hospitals are said to exceed their income, the deficiency of which is supplied by charity. Poor travellers are allowed one night's lodging, and have money given them in the morning to carry them on. The gates are shut at sun-set, and never opened after. No Turk observes

* At Geneva every attorney takes an oath not to undertake any cause he does not think just.

his

his Ramaudan more strictly than I did the day I arrived at Geneva, or I should not have arrived in time. Eagles are constantly kept in the town of Geneva, as bears are at Berne; and, I believe, for no better reason.

The Genevois are in general rich, they are also provident, and their magazines are seldom without a sufficiency of corn for two years subsistence: besides which, many families find their account in keeping a year's stock before-hand. The corn is chiefly furnished from Savoy.—There are two market days every week for corn, and two for wine; what is brought in must be sold the same day. The Savoyards supply them also with butter, and will sometimes put stones into it to increase the weight:—extreme poverty is a sad enemy to honesty in every part of the world.

The Genevois are long lived; but whether it be owing to the salubrity of the air, or the temperate manner of their living, I cannot determine: I knew six gentlemen belonging to the same club, whose ages together made five hundred and sixty-two, and I remember to have sat once on the same bench with four, the youngest of whom was eighty-two; and yet, Geneva is very cold in winter, and the Bize, of all winds, is the most intolerable.

The Genevois were not expensive in their houses:

houses:—they were not suffered to use any figured plate, nor to wear lace or diamonds. Balls were over by ten o'clock, and usually began at four. Those they called *Bals de Nuit*, were seldom allowed except at marriages: they began at ten, and lasted as long as the company thought fit. They had not even a theatre!—Much has been written on the subject by the most celebrated wits of that time, who I think might have spared themselves the trouble, since the stage undoubtedly is laudable, or otherwise, according to the use or abuse that is made of it. The men live very much in clubs. Their amusement in summer is bowls, not rolled like ours over a level green, but pitched on any ground, even or not, as they find it. They are famous archers, and many of us Englishmen were chosen members of that society, and became archers also. It was at one of those meetings that I made acquaintance with LEOTARD the painter, who had been in England: he was a Genevois, though he constantly wore the Turkish habit:—WORTLEY MONTAGUE did the same at Venice: in many respects it certainly is a more convenient dress than ours.—The Turks wear no garters, no tight wristbands or shirt collars, to hinder the free circulation of their blood; and, without doubt, are the healthier for it.

I found the men better in general than they had

had been represented. The sense of this country is surely undervalued by its neighbours. Though the attic wit may be wanting, the Swiss are by no means deficient in penetration or judgment; though taste and elegance are beyond their reach, their fidelity and honesty may shame those who are endowed with more brilliant qualifications; and in many parts of Switzerland you will find them civilized, yet uncorrupt. However respectable genius may be, good sense is more necessary in the common occurrences of life:—genius may neither know how to stir a fire or snuff a candle.

The women affect the French manners, and are very amiable; they pass their evenings in small parties, called Societies, to which strangers are frequently invited. It was at one of these assemblies that Mademoiselle G——, lost the heart of our friend, Lord W—— G——, by eating too many *petits patés*. Petits patés were at that time very much in fashion, and as the Genevois dine early, slip down very easily. At a concert I gave, a large quantity of them had been provided with other things to be eaten between the acts. I was called out,—TOINETTE, the girl of the house, who had the management of the side-board, wanted to speak to me:—I found her in tears—I concluded she was taken ill:—"Toinette, what is the matter with you?"

"Sir,

" Sir, *ahi, ahi,*" replied Toinette, sobbing, " Monsieur S—— (a Geneva Parson), has been here—*ahi, ahi, ahi ;*—I left the room for an instant only,—*ahi, ahi, ahi, ahi,*—and he has eat up every one of the *petits patés !*"

Monsieur —— was frequently invited to those concerts. There is a particularity in that gentleman's history, which, in the manner it was then told, I will now relate.—He courted Mademoiselle ——, but whether for the charms of her person, or *les beaux yeux de sa Cassette,* I know not. At any rate, he played his part so well, that he became the favourite, and their marriage was concluded on. At this moment the famous Count de ——, a French *petit maitre,* vain, insolent, and brave, arrived at Geneva, and no sooner saw the two lovers, than he conceived the idea of disturbing the nuptials. He easily got introduced to the lady, and immediately gave the gentleman to understand, that as he never suffered a competitor, he had only to chuse whether he would part with his mistress or his life. The alternative, you will allow, was not pleasant, and my friend, who was a lover, and was not a swordsman, found himself in a critical situation, from which he knew not very well how to extricate himself. He was not deficient in courage, but was perfectly ignorant of the art of defence. His first thought, therefore,

was

was to send for PONSON, a fencing-master, to whom he related what had happened. Ponson, who knew the Count, told him fairly he could not be in worse hands; that his rival was an excellent swordsman, had fought several duels, and had never failed to kill his man. Rare news for Monsieur ——! who eagerly asked Ponson "If he could give him no instructions!" —"None!"—replied Ponson;—"None!— The time does not admit of it, and I could give you no lesson of fencing but what would do you more harm than good." Monsieur —— was now in despair.—After a long silence, Ponson, clapping him on the back, cried, "Courage, sir, I think I can serve you! Dare you look your enemy in the face?"—"*Certainly I dare!*" —"Well then, follow my directions, and you shall kill the Count:—he is skilful, but passionate; frequent successes have rendered him impetuous; he will attack you furiously, and despise you sufficiently not to think of his own defence: stand firm, look him steadily in the face, you have a long arm, extend it to the utmost, and, as he will rush on you with fury, it is probable *he may kill himself.*" It happened exactly as Ponson foretold; the Count came furiously and blindly on, and at his first lunge, received the point of his rival's sword full in his bosom, and fell dead at his feet. Monsieur ——

had

had thus the honour to kill the Count de ——, and the happiness to marry Mademoiselle —— shortly after.

Here I met with that extraordinary character, old HUET:—when turned of eighty, his life was saved by his servant, who seeing him fall down in an apoplexy, bled him instantly.—He left him a legacy in his will on condition that he did so no more.

LETTER IV.

VOLTAIRE is a great loss to the English; he received them well, and invited them to the fêtes he gave, not the least interesting of which were his own plays, acted in his own theatre. As an actor (for he sometimes acted himself), he had little merit. In this he resembles a greater genius of our own, who makes but an indifferent figure in the *dramatis personæ* of the sixteenth century, and whose best part is said to have been that of the *Ghost* in Hamlet. I introduced myself to this amiable Frenchman as an English Traveller desirous of paying my respects to a man whose writings had afforded me so much entertainment. He received me with the greatest civility, and gave me a general invitation to his house. He never failed to present to you a poor toad-eating Jesuit, *le Pere Adam*, for the sake of a joke that might have been good the first time, but was an insolent cruelty ever after. " *Je vous presente Monsieur*

le Pere Adam qui n'est pas le premier des hommes." Like other geniuses he had his particularities, and in society was sometimes agreeable, sometimes otherwise. He was polite in his manners, but satirical in his reflections, to which ill-health did not a little contribute. He told a ridiculous story, made, I believe, on purpose, at the moment, to disconcert a lady present, remarkable for her prudery: " You have not heard, perhaps," said he, " that a lady, the other day, whose name I shall not mention, questioned her cook-maid about a sweet-bread she had ordered to be put by: ' Betty,' said she, ' What is become of the sweet-bread?' ' I have eat it, Madam,' replied Betty:—' But I *longed* for it;' —' So did I, Madam!'—' But I am with *child*:'—' So am I, Madam:'—But I am with child by your *master*, hussey!'—*And, so am I, Madam!*" An acquaintance of ours, Lord N——, was not less ludicrous on a similar occasion. Being in a boat on the river Thames, with the Duchess of B—— (a lady of the same stamp), and seeing some boys bathing, cried out, affecting great surprise: " Look, Duchess! Look at those naked *girls* in the water! Is it not a shame?"—" Girls! my Lord, they are *boys!*"—" *Your Grace knows best.*" But, to return to VOLTAIRE: his features were ugly in the extreme, but the activity of his mind was expressed

pressed in his countenance. No man ever wrote more agreeably,—it is much to be lamented that he should have done more harm than good. I am sorry to add that he was an enemy to SHAKESPEARE, whom he both copied and condemned—But who would not forgive *la jalousie du Metier*, that frailty of human nature, to the indefatigable friend of the unfortunate CALLAS. The fame of SHAKESPEARE is out of the reach of slander.—Time, that universal destroyer, is the stamp of genius, and the Works of HOMER will be read when the pyramids of Egypt shall be no more.

ROUSSEAU, not less famous for his misfortunes than his talents, persecuted and proscribed at Geneva, was at that time at Moitier Travers, a high mountain in the neighbourhood of Neuf Chatel, whither he had retired sulkily from the world, and from whence he wrote his *Lettres de la Montagne*, not the best of his performances. I took some trouble to get at this extraordinary man at the risk of not seeing him at last, for report said, he would see nobody. I passed, however, several hours in his company very agreeably, but found the celebrated author of Emile, as I expected, differing as much in his manners, as in his writings, from his more fortunate rival. He told me that the only reason that prevented him taking refuge in England, was

the great kindness he had received from the French during twenty-one years residence among them, which did not permit him to seek an asylum in a country in enmity with them; "*malgre toute l'envie qu'il en avoit.*" I know your partiality to this extraordinary man, whose talents you admire, and whose misfortunes you pity; but you will not deny that *his* writings also are in many parts exceptionable. I have just been reading his Emile:—When the Governor of Emile, to try the patience of his pupil, supposes the possibility of Sophy's death, and asks what he would do in such a case:—"*What I would do,*" cries Emile, "*I know not; but this I know, that I would never see again the face of the man who told me of it.*"—What a lesson of Philosophy!—He also says, "*Je hais les livres, ils n'apprennent qu' à parler de ce qu'on ne sçait pas.*"—What a declaration from a Man of Letters!

Though the death of these great men is a loss to Switzerland, should you pass a summer at Geneva you will not want employment; make the Tour du Lac,—see the salt-works at Aigle,*

* Every hundred weight of water contains eleven pounds and a half of salt. They make two thousand five hundred pounds of salt a day.

visit

—visit Lausanne, Vevay, and Meilleurie, where I remember to have read the Nouvelle Eloise at a time of my life that rendered every spot it mentioned interesting. Follow the Rhone to its source, and see scenes of savage nature that set the pencil of SALVATOR at defiance. The Vallais merits your observation, where, for several weeks together they never see the rays of the sun,* and where the air at no time has a free circulation,—where, among the inhabitants you see creatures scarcely human; *Cretins*, whose sagacity is infinitely beneath the instinct of your dog, and whose stature, about four feet high, is rendered more disgustful by immense goitres.†

At the Grand St Bernard you will experience another atmosphere,—perpetual winter, where the thermometer, even in summer, is seldom above the freezing point. The Convent, which is one thousand two hundred and forty-one toises above the level of the sea, is probably the highest house in Europe: it takes its name from a French Monk of the twelfth century, who, in the different capacities of saint and hero, founded a hundred and sixty convents, and sent

* Three weeks before the winter solstice, and three weeks after.

† A kind of wen in the neck, which sometimes grows to an immense size.

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innumerable thousands of infatuated wretches to the Crusades, preposterously called *Holy wars*, from whence they were never to return. The Monks are twelve in number, and of the Augustine order. They are of infinite service to poor travellers, who frequently would perish from cold and hunger, were it not for their assistance. During the winter months they constantly send out a person accompanied by great dogs trained for that purpose, to look for such as have lost their way in the snow, or are oppressed with hunger and fatigue. If they sleep they die,—and yet, I fancy no death is attended with so little pain. We all know how pleasant sleep is after fatigue, and these sleepers awake no more. I went thither in the month of August, and had occasion to remark a strange confusion of the seasons, not less than the extremes of summer and winter in the same day. I rode in my waistcoat in the Vallais, and arrived at the Convent not only with my great coat on, but was glad enough to warm myself by the great fire I found there. This is one passage into Italy, and by some thought to be that of HANNIBAL.

The Glaciere de Chamogni is not less worthy your attention: it has the appearance of a frozen sea, and the ice, which fills the whole vale,

has

has probably been there ever since the deluge.* The Crevices, and there are many, are dangerous: be cautious how you venture over them, nor stir a step without your guide. Cherries were not ripe at Chamogni in the month of August;—they had not begun hay-making—women were then mowing the grass, and the corn which had been sown in May was but just come into ear.

If you have time to spare, there is not a canton in Switzerland that has not, besides its natural beauties, some particularities either in the government, production, industry, manners, or even dress of its inhabitants that merit observation. The Protestant Cantons are better peopled, more rich, and more flourishing than the Catholic; and you will observe that, notwithstanding its barren mountains, they reckon a thousand inhabitants for every league square:—France reckons eight hundred only. This extraordinary difference is only to be accounted for by the difference of their religion and go-

* The ice that melts in the summer, is renewed by the snow that falls in the winter. The Glaciere is also supplied by the snow which melts on the neighbouring mountains during the day, and falls into the Valley, where it freezes after sun-set.

vernment. LAVATER, the celebrated physiognomist, will discover the disposition of your mind by the look of your countenance; and MICHAEL SCHUPPACK, called, the Physician of the Mountain, will determine the state of your body from the appearance of your water.

If you are a musician, listen to the *Renz des Vaches*, the favourite Swiss tune, and remember that useful lesson, *de Gustibus non est disputandum*. You may have heard, perhaps, that this famous tune is forbidden to be played by the Swiss troops in the service of France, as it occasions *la maladie du pays* (a longing to return home). It is not so charming but any other man except a Swiss may listen to it without danger.

See the fall of the Rhine, and, if an admirer of mechanism, examine the curious bridge at Schaffhouse, a single arch, a span of three hundred and forty-two feet, made by a common carpenter.*

If picturesque beauties please you, visit the lakes, and if your search after knowledge, be proof against fatigue and danger, the summit of Mount Blanc is an enterprise worthy of you. Mount Blanc is not only the highest mountain

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* ULRICK GRUBENMAN of Appenzell.

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in Europe, but probably in the world, if measured from the base on which it stands.*

The arsenal at Berne presents you with the statue of WILLIAM TELL, shooting at an apple on the head of his son. The history of that event is as interesting as it is strange. GESLER, Governor of Uri, proud, insolent, and brutal, not content with the respect that was due to his office, but intoxicated with power, fixed his hat on a pole in the market-place at Altorff, capital of the province, and ordered the inhabitants on pain of death, to bow to it as they passed. WILLIAM TELL, a young man, whose principles were republican, and whose spirit could ill brook this vile idolatry, disobeyed the order, and was condemned by the tyrant to shoot with a cross-bow an apple placed on the head of his favourite son, which missing, designedly or otherwise, he was immediately to be put to death. TELL, shocked at the order—shuddering at the risk—preferred instant death to such a trial, and made a voluntary offer of his own life to save that of

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* Monsieur de SAUSSURE, Professor of Natural History at Geneva, ascended it on the first of August, 1787, as Monsieur PACCARD, Physician at Chamouni, the first adventurer, had done the year before.

his

his innocent child, but was told that unless he submitted to his sentence, both should die. Remonstrance was of no avail—resistance impossible, and TELL submitted to his fate. The awful moment arrives—the market-place is crowded with spectators, and GESLER himself present.—The son is placed at a short distance before his father—an apple on his head. Fancy to yourself the solemn silence that then prevailed—fancy to yourself what were the feelings of the multitude, of the son, of the father:—at length, the arrow flies, and pierces the apple, when it should have pierced the Tyrant's heart.*

The triumph of innocence had been incomplete had it ended thus. A coward is always as suspicious as he is cruel, and GESLER perceiving another arrow which TELL had endeavoured to conceal, asked him for what purpose that arrow was intended?—"*For you!*"—replied the hero, —"*for you! had* I *slain my son.*" A brave answer like this, no tyrant could forgive: TELL

* SUETONIUS tells us that DOMITIAN could shoot an arrow, even at a considerable distance, betwixt a boy's fingers, without wounding either of them. ASTER wrote on his arrow: "*To the* RIGHT *eye of* PHILIP." These render this account of WILLIAM TELL less improbable.

was immediately seized, bound, and forced into a boat destined to transport him to a fortress on the bank of the lake; where, to see his orders executed, and perhaps to enjoy the distress of his victim, GESLER accompanies him. The dagger, which though unperceived, still hangs by a single thread over the head of the innocent, when guilty to such an excess could not fail to fall on the Governor of Uri.—The very elements take part against him, force him to unbind his captive, and seek his own safety from the skill of the man on whom he had so lately exercised such unheard of cruelty. Tradition relates that, by the extraordinary exertions of TELL, the boat approached the shore, when he instantly leapt out, and making his escape, lay in wait for his Excellency the Governor, at a place which he knew he must pass, and there (I should have seen it with pleasure) struck the tyrant to the heart, and freed his country.

I now address you as a soldier, and recommend the military history of this warlike people to your attention. Famous have been their exploits!—Inferior always in number to their enemy, they either conquered, or bravely died. I do not recollect one dishonourable retreat. Morat still possesses the precious relics of a defeated army, and Saint Jaques,—Pardon me, ye immortal heroes of Thermopyle; pardon me, if I drop

drop a tear to the memory of your rivals at Saint Jaques! *

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* The army of the DUKE of BURGUNDY, consisting of forty-five thousand men, was entirely defeated at Morat: twenty-five thousand were left dead on the field of battle. Over the building, where their bones are preserved, you read the following laconic inscription:

"Deo Opt. Max.

"Caroli inclyti et fortissimi Burgundiæ Ducis Exercitus Muratum Obsidens ab Helvetiis cæsus hoc sui Monumentum reliquit. Anno MCCCCLXXVI."

At the Plains of Saint Jacques near Basle, fifteen hundred Swiss engaged the whole French army, consisting of thirty thousand men, where, after a terrible slaughter of the enemy, they were all slain except ten, who, on their return home, were declared infamous for surviving their countrymen. The French army was commanded by the Dauphin, afterwards LOUIS XI. The battle was fought the 26th of August, 1444, and the bodies of eight thousand French were left dead on the plain. It has been said of the Swiss that fell:—"Ad extremum non victi Suitenses, sed vincendo fatigati inter ingentes hostium Catervas ceciderunt."

LETTER V.

FROM Geneva, or from Lyons, you may go to Turin either by voiturier or post. In a poor country like this you must not expect to find excellent roads, or good accommodations.—Rattling cascades and roaring rivers, woods, rocks, and mountains, supply the deficiency at first, perhaps, not disagreeably, and afterwards, *pazienza*, a word constantly used by the Italians in all their distresses, and the first an Englishman should learn in travelling through their country.

The more you consider the Monte della grotta, the more it will astonish you, where an excellent road was cut through a solid rock by CHARLES EMANUEL II. Duke of Savoy, in the year 1670: a stupendous work, little inferior to that of Posilippo.* The inscription does

* Grotta di Posilippo, at Naples, thought to have been made by LUCULLUS.

honor

honor both to the Prince and the Author: it is elegant without flattery, and mentions the difficulties he overcame without exceeding the truth.—" *Natura occlusam, Romanis intentatam, cæteris desperatam, &c.*"

Some think that it was near *les Echelles* that HANNIBAL made his first attack on the tremendous rocks which opposed his passage into Italy. Three different places have been named by PLUTARCH, LIVY, and POLYBIUS. I should myself incline to the little Saint Bernard, for this reason: POLYBIUS wrote nearest the time the event happened, was intimate in the family of SCIPIO, and what is perhaps most material of all, was himself a soldier. LIVY tells us that he dissolved the rock with vinegar.* However ridiculous this story may appear, you will allow, in whatever manner he effected it, it was a great attempt worthy the enterprising spirit of that brave Carthagenian. Here I saw a poor solitary girl attending a few goats and sheep, that brought to my mind *la Bergère des Alpes*, † and I was at that moment sentimentally enough inclined to fancy I saw many beauties that upon nearer acquaintance I might not have found.

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* Also JUVENAL,—" *Et Montes rupit aceto.*"
SAT. 10.

† MARMONTEL, *Contes Moraux.*

Here

Here I had the happiness to afford some relief to a poor travelling Englishman, not because he was my countryman, but because he was in distress, and in a strange land. I flatter myself I should have given an Italian the preference in England for the same good reason. The pleasure a generous mind receives in relieving the distress of a fellow-creature, is in proportion to his wants, and above all local prejudice. I admire these liberal sentiments in another, I encourage them in myself, and wish every Briton thought the same.

If you mean to see the *grande Chartreuse*, an object deserving a traveller's notice, you turn off at *les Echelles*. Should you at any time visit Grenoble, remember BAYARD's tomb: a gentleman, who, by a conduct as irreproachable as gallant, obtained from an envious world a title beyond the power of Sovereigns to bestow:—he was called to the day of his death, "*Le Chevalier sans reproche, et sans peur.*"

Before you arrive at Chamberry you will see a cascade that is said to fall one hundred and fifty feet perpendicular. Chamberry, capital of Savoy, and once the residence of its Dukes, is a small ill populated town of a melancholy appearance, not ill suited to the poverty of the inhabitants. It is well situated, and as a summer residence not without advantages, but partakes too much

much of the Alpine snow to be agreeable in winter. The Savoyards are a brave and generous people, industrious though not encouraged, and chearful though oppressed. In former times they were a warlike and respectable nation. The Allobroges are frequently mentioned in the history of ancient Rome, and the conspiracy of Cataline was discovered by means of their Ambassadors. Alas! where are their Ambassadors now? Modern Savoyards are reduced to the dreadful alternative of starving at home, or submitting to the meanest of all occupations abroad. I admire the character of the people, and lament the cruel policy of the Court of Piedmont that keeps this country poor, as the surest means of securing it to themselves. In this neighbourhood are the baths of Aix, a chalybiate water, much resorted to in the proper season.

The wine of Mont Melian is famous. At Aiguebelle you should see the remains of the village of Randan, destroyed in the year 1750, by the fall of a mountain. The fate of Randan was similar to that of Valeia. Les Avalenches in some parts of the Alps are dangerous in the spring.* Travellers at that time are careful

* An Avalanche is a large body of snow, which, detaching itself from the mountain, overwhelms all beneath.

to make as little noise as possible, lest the sudden vibration of the air should detach the snow that is hanging over their heads. I have read of one, four hundred feet long, ninety-four wide, and sixty-six deep, that buried for thirty-seven days two women and a child in a stable, who, during that whole time lived on the milk of two goats they had with them, drinking the snow water which they melted with their hands. The goats were better off—they had their usual provender within their reach.

The roads in this country are made and kept in repair by the parishes. The poor peasant is obliged to work in proportion to the number of his cattle; an increase of wealth only exposes him to an increase of oppression. Our turnpikes, though expensive, are upon a better principle, for those only contribute who are benefited by them. You will pass over many a tottering bridge, and travel on the brink of many a precipice. There is no danger, and yet I could not help sometimes looking down upon them with the same terror as if they were to be my grave. On one of these mountains a Hermit has chosen his residence.—You will seldom see a spot better fitted to meditation. But when I consider the gloom that surrounds it; the slender fare, probably such only as the woods afford, and the rigour of a long winter, eight months at the least,

I am at a loss to conceive what abominable crime that man had committed who first thought such mortification necessary. The horror of the scene reminded me of the reply the old hermit made to a young fellow of a very dissolute life, "Father," said he, "you will be badly off if there is not another world!"—"True son," replied the hermit, "but you will be worse off *if there is.*"

As you approach Lanenbourg the vale becomes narrower, the ascent more rapid, and the face of the country more miserable. The inhabitants are poor in the extreme: they cultivate a little corn on the side of the mountain wherever corn will grow: in summer they make the bread they eat in winter—bread that they soften with the melted snow, and, I make no doubt, frequently with their tears. The minds of the people are as little cultivated, and the manners as little improved, as the country they inhabit. Here nature reigns in despite of art, and here probably are the cloud-capped mountains that will last decay. As for the outward appearance of the natives, it is scarcely human, and we might conclude with the Poet, that, "Some of nature's journeymen had made them, and not made them well; they imitate humanity so abominably." Many are disfigured by goitres:—various have been the conjectures concerning this strange excre-

crescence,—I had myself my doubts till I read Captain Cook's Second Voyage to the Southern Hemisphere; he tells us that the melted ice which his sailors drank for want of water produced a similar effect. In Tartary the goitre is observed in similar situations, as in the Alps; females are more subject to it than males. Forster attributes the cause to a deprivation of fixed air in the iced water: others account for it more simply by the continual use of water always cold in the extreme. In either case, the opinion pretty generally received of a mineral substance in the water itself is completely refuted. These goitres sometimes grow to an immense size, are horridly ugly, and yet custom has rendered them so familiar to the eyes of the inhabitants, that they are considered as a beauty. I have been told that a stranger going into a church at Saint Jean de Maurienne, was laughed at for being without one! It is said, however, that the Priest rebuked them for it in the wordsof our Saviour, and wisely remarked that, "It is better to enter into Paradise *without a goitre*, than with the best of goitres to suffer everlasting damnation." *

You will see many an *orang outang*, but not one *Antinous*. It is true that animal treads close

* Vide eighteenth chapter of Saint Matthew.

upon our heels. I shall never forget an observation of a noble Lord of my acquaintance; he said, " He never saw a monkey but he was ready to shake him by the hand, and call him *Cousin*:"—a strange proof how little we know ourselves, for, had he seen himself as we saw him, he would have been the last person to have made the observation.

You may judge what kind of living we met with in this poor country. You may hear talk of hares and partridges, gelinottes and cocs de bruyere, but you will not see one of them.* The fowls we ate were killed on purpose for us, and were tougher than the meat of which Lady MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE complains. Had these poor people been Turks, and our Vetturinos Janissaries, they must have been utterly ruined.†

At length we arrived at Lanenbourg, a well-peopled village at the foot of Mount Cenis, the passage of which mountain constantly employs the principal part of the inhabitants. Your

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* The hares and partridges upon the Alps are said to turn white in the winter.

† Lady MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE's Janissaries obliged the Turks to pay them for the use of their teeth, worn with doing them the honor of eating their meat.—*Vide that Lady's Letters.*

Vet-

Vetturino has all the trouble of dealing with them, but were you to travel post they could take no advantage of your ignorance. The price is fixed, and a person appointed to provide the number of men and mules that are necessary for you : no imposition is suffered. In this the King of Sardinia differs from all other Sovereigns, and kindly takes the ignorant and defenceless traveller under his protection,—thank him in your heart, for he saves you much expence and trouble.

Those Travellers who have been brought up in Sybarite effeminacy, whose tender limbs are offended with the folds of a rose leaf—are fatigued at the sight of another's labour, and expect all the comforts of their own country in the midst of these frozen mountains, will have a bad time of it at Lanenbourg, while those who are urged on by an interesting pursuit, be it what it may, will look forward like HANNIBAL towards the fertile plains of Italy, and a moment's reflection on the hardships he suffered in his passage, may make them think their coarse living, luxury. Comfort, my good Sir, is unknown in Savoy.—What we English call comfort, is not understood I believe in any other country, nor to be exprest in any other language. It is rest of the body, it is repose of the mind, without business, without bustle, and with every thing con-

convenient and pleasant about you :—it is often lost in a palace, and found in a cottage,—it is in itself a trifle :—a trifle gives it—a trifle takes it away :—it is a cheerful room—a good fire—a dish of tea—but—not as I am now drinking it, with a chimney that smokes, a door I can't shut, and a window that is broken. It would be difficult to relate all I suffered at Lanenbourg ;—I never passed such a night!—I slept in my cloaths—the bed was full of bugs—the house full of people—and, to mend the matter, my good neighbours above, p——d upon me through the ceiling—I dreamt I was drowning, and fancied I was in the sea.*

We were ready early—we had no temptation to lengthen our stay at Lanenbourg. When the morning appeared, and the chairs were prepared, we set out nobly escorted, each chair having six or eight chairmen to attend it, and to relieve one another.† The avant guard consisted of a considerable number of mules loaded with

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* The beds in this country have no testers.

† A light elbow chair without legs, having a board slung to support your feet. It is fastened to two long poles, and carried like a sedan. By writing to Turin, sedan chairs may be procured, if illness or the badness of the weather should make them necessary.

our baggage, and the wreck of a carriage that seemed so completely undone as to leave little hopes of ever being restored to its former state,—our servants and Vetturinos mounted, brought up the rear.

The ascent of the mountain is rendered as easy as the height will permit.* To gain the summit you may suppose a work of labour,—it is also a work of time. Many are the resting places, and many the relays. On one of these occasions a dispute arose who should carry my children, or rather who should not carry me; the consequence of which was, that they set me down, and the dispute continued so long, and was so obstinately contested, that I began to think they never intended to take me up again. We arrived at the top at last. Should you return in winter, you may descend rapidly on a sledge (which they call *ramasser*), and in a few minutes find yourself at the bottom of a mountain that took you more than an hour to ascend. It is not dangerous, and saves much time and trouble. The plain that now opened before us is still encompassed by higher mountains where the snow never melts. I once passed mount Cenis in summer; the plain was then covered

* The Plain is one thousand toises above the Mediterranean.

with

with flowers; it was now covered with snow. Excellent pasture then formed a delightful contrast with the misery that surrounded it—all now was of one colour, and all was horrid. It is about six miles over. The lake is well stocked with excellent trout, though it is frozen at least seven months out of the twelve.*

At the Grande Croix your chairmen stop to refresh themselves. It is not the interest of the traveller they should stop too long, lest they should drink too much. A few miles distant on the right is the famous *Col de L'Assiette*, where Count Bellisle made an unsuccessful attack in the year 1749, and lost his life; but, what is more to be lamented, sacrificed a parcel of brave fellows in an enterprise more worthy of Don Quixote than of an experienced commander. A letter to his mistress was found in his pocket after his death, giving her the news of *his victory*—though the general was short-sighted, you will allow that he was provident. From one of these mountains, (it must ever, I believe, remain uncertain which) Hannibal first viewed

* Cattle are brought hither at St. Jean, and remain till the first snow falls, which is usually some time in October. The cows are milked twice a day, and give from sixteen to twenty pints. The cheese is excellent.

the

the rich vale of Lombardy. He had employed fifteen days in his passage—two days he passed on the summit:—Turin was his first military enterprise.

The descent into Piedmont is rapid; it would be dangerous were the chairmen less expert. At Novalese we dined while our baggage was visited and our carriage put together. I cannot express the pleasure I felt at my arrival on this side the Alps. I doubt if the sight of the long-wished-for plains of Italy was more welcome to HANNIBAL who had suffered innumerable difficulties, had lost three thousand horse and the best of his infantry, than the inn at Novalese to your humble servant—half starved with cold and hunger. We slept at Suze, the first town in Piedmont, a place of considerable strength, which secures this pass into Italy. Here are the remains of a triumphal arch said to be of the time of Augustus, the first with which you meet; see it if you can, for at your return it will no longer be worth your notice. If you arrive in summer you will be astonished at the *Luccioles*, little flies that have the phosphoric quality of the glow-worm, and are peculiar to this side the Alps;—at Naples the air is full of them.

At the Palace of Rivoli, VICTOR AMADEUS was confined and died. He had resigned his

crown

crown to his son some years before, and was afterwards weak enough to wish to take it back. The Sovereign who abdicates is seldom so long between his throne and the grave.*

From Rivoli to Turin the road is beautiful.—An avenue of about six miles in length is terminated by the Superga.† On the seventh day we arrived at the capital of Piedmont.

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* The abdication of VICTOR AMADEUS II. is thought to have been a stroke of policy to avoid a momentary evil. He chose Chambery for his retreat at the age of sixty-four. This took place September 2d, 1730. He returned to Piedmont the August following, and went to Montcallier, where shortly after, intriguing to recover the throne, he was made prisoner by his son, and sent to Rivoli, where he died. Had the father succeeded, it is probable the son had suffered the same fate. The King had already married the Countess St. Sebastian, his mistress, and the succession might have taken another course.

† This church was built by VICTOR AMADEUS to satisfy a vow, made when the town was besieged by the French in 1706. He is buried here, and it is since become the mausoleum of the family.

LETTER VI.

TURIN is the capital of Piedmont, and the residence of the KING of SARDINIA, a title taken from an island in the Mediterranean, otherwise he is only Duke of Savoy, and his son Prince of Piedmont. It was VICTOR AMADEUS Duke of Savoy, who exchanged Sicily for Sardinia, an exchange dictated by necessity, not by interest, for the title of King excepted, the advantage received from this island, famous at the time of the Republic of Rome, and frequently a cause of her quarrels with the Carthagenians, is very inconsiderable.

Nothing but an insuperable dislike to sea expeditions prevented my visiting Sardinia last summer. An account I have since received of the manners of the inhabitants from a friend who is just returned, has satisfied every wish, and unless I had as many lives as a cat, should scarcely be

be persuaded to venture myself among them. The equipage of a Sardinian is a horse, a gun, and a stiletto. He always goes armed, even to church, and is thus at all times prepared to defend himself, or offend his neighbour. The island is in continual warfare, and the strength of the government is insufficient to punish offenders. A few months ago a pitched battle was fought between two parishes; the curate, who was at the head of one of them was immediately made rector, and all the others pardoned. The Governor told my friend that he knew no better method than to reward, as he dared not punish. But to return to Turin.

The town is pleasantly situated on a plain at the foot of the Alps, seven hundred and thirty-five feet above the level of the sea, is three miles in circumference, and contains about eighty thousand inhabitants. The new town is well built and regular; the streets are strait, wide, and not ill paved, and are easily kept clean, as they can be overflowed at pleasure. *La rue du Po* is beautiful. Large squares and magnificent buildings are not wanting, though they are neither numerous nor remarkable. Churches there are many, few worth seeing, the Chapel of Le Saint Suaire excepted, on account of its precious relic, the winding-sheet of our SAVIOUR. This

happens

happens not to be the only one; but the Piedmontois wisely persuade themselves that it is the true one.* When the Abbé de MAROLLES was shewn the head of Saint JOHN at Amiens, he said, as he kissed it, "*God be thanked, this is the fifth or sixth I have already had the honor of kissing.*" The Superga you should see for the sake of the view. It was built to satisfy a vow made by VICTOR AMADEUS in 1706, when the town was besieged by the French.—A French author observes with some humour, and probably not without some truth, that he must have been confoundedly frightened to have made such a vow, and erect such a building at such an enormous expence. It was from this elevated spot that VICTOR AMADEUS and Prince EUGENE reconnoitred the French army: the Capuchins' Convent you should also visit;—the latter was a principal post in possession of the French at the time of the siege.

The Palace of the King is well furnished with pictures of the best masters: it would exceed my plan to describe them, or the famous GERRARD DOW would not be the only one I should recommend to your observation.

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* Besançon, capital of Franche Comté, has also its *Saint Suaire*, as well as Turin and Rome.

The

The extreme purity of this Court has banished some naked beauties, which do honor in the execution at least to their authors, and are worth your inquiry. The other Palaces are those of the Duke of SAVOY and Prince of CARIGNAN.

The citadel, which is one of the strongest in Europe, cannot be seen without leave:—as for me, I had enough of citadels at Luxembourg;—besides, I will confess to you, although you are a soldier, that I admire nothing about them except their neatness. I might it is true have been better acquainted with their excellencies, having studied fortification when at Geneva under a famous engineer, at whose house I boarded, but at that age the old gentleman's discourse, and the terms he used, only served, I fear, to put me in mind of his fair daughter.

The army of Piedmont is respectable, and consists in time of peace of not less than thirty thousand men. The military order of Saint MAURICE is a green riband worn like that of Saint LOUIS in France. The Annunciation, the most ancient order in Europe, is the blue riband of Savoy. The government is absolute. The executive power is in the hands of a Senate appointed by the King. The revenue is about a million sterling, which is expended with great frugality. The police, I am told, is good: the people are quiet and seem contented.

Bread

Bread and meat are sold at a fixed price; the shape of the bread is particular—you buy a stick of bread, not a loaf: those who like crust better than crumb should eat no other.

The commerce of Piedmont consists chiefly of cattle and raw silk, much of the latter returns again into the country after it is made up. The balance of trade is not in their favor, and more money is sent out of the country than comes into it. Silk stockings are famous at Turin; if you want any buy them there. The silk of Piedmont is said to be superior to any other, but whether the leaves of the mulberry are of a better quality, or the water in which the silk is spun off contributes to its strength, I cannot determine. You know this is the white mulberry, a tree planted on purpose for the silk-worm: the leaf is smoother and more delicate than ours, but the fruit is not good to eat. The silk-worm is hatched in the month of April, and is regularly fed with these leaves till it spins the silk. Shortly after it makes it appearance in the shape of a grub, then of a moth, when they engender, lay their eggs, and die. Sensuality might envy this last state of their existence, when probably the excess of their pleasure is in proportion to the short duration of their lives. The silk is spoiled if the grub eats its way out, to prevent which they preserve only enough to breed, and kill the

rest

rest by the heat of an oven. The males are easily distinguished, one end being pointed; the females have both ends round. The climate of England is not favourable to the silk-worm, a native of China, but it is the peculiar privilege of our fortunate isle to enrich herself by the produce of other countries: they were first introduced into Europe by the Emperor JUSTINIAN, to whom the modern Romans are obliged for a piece of effeminacy unknown to the CÆSARS.—At the time of AURELIAN, silk was valued at its weight in gold.

The Academy at present is little frequented by strangers, nor is the University in any great repute. Science seldom flourishes under a military government, nor do the Arts, music excepted, receive much encouragement. PUGNIANI, GIARDINI, VIOTTI, &c., are Piedmontois, and the unfortunate DAVID RIZZIO, a better musician than a statesman, to whom the Scotch may probably have been indebted for the elegance of their ballads, was also of this country. The famous BODONI, a native of Piedmont, is established at Parma. I think it is the observation of BARETTI, that Piedmont never produced a Poet:—I dont know how it should,—till the other day they had neither Grammar nor Dictionary! The language is a *patois*, partly French, partly Italian; and so strangely

strangely corrupted, that it is not understood by either of those nations: however, Count ALFIERI has at last effaced that blot from their character, and has written several tragedies in which you will find sentiments not unworthy an ancient Roman. The Public Library of the University is open to you when you please, and in the Museum you will find entertainment for an idle hour. La Table Isiaque is covered with hieroglyphics, which the learned world will be obliged to any one to explain.

The Hospital I am told is well provided with every necessary convenience. At the *Apothicarie* medicines are administered to the poor *gratis*, and physicians and surgeons appointed to attend them.

The Opera is one of the best in Italy; it is directed by a set of gentlemen who receive the profits, and take the trouble and expence upon themselves. The Theatre is immense; nor is it unusual to see a company of soldiers or a troop of horse make their appearance upon the stage. It was at this theatre, among other extraordinary things, that I saw MITHRIDATES sprain his ancle by falling into the sea. The Court in my time was as regular as the clock. The opera was of necessity to finish exactly at ten; and if one air took more time in singing than usual, the next was shortened to bring matters even. The

great theatre is open only during the carnival. There is another theatre for burlettas and plays. Boxes are always to be bought for the night.—The Noblesse (all of them are not rich) will sometimes accommodate foreigners with theirs when they do not go themselves. An odd thing happened,—I had a box for the season,—a lady of my acquaintance borrowed the key for one night,—I sent it her, and having unexpectedly occasion a few hours after for a box myself, I sent to buy one, and, to my great astonishment, bought my own key again. The pit in Italy is more convenient than in France, where the company are obliged to stand, though I know not why they are made to undergo so unnecessary and so severe a penance.

The royal villas in the neighbourhood are worth your seeing. At Stupigny you may hunt with the King. Though much inferior to the diversion you are used to in England, the *coup d'œil* is fine; *l'equipage de chasse, magnifique;* and the hunting interesting on this side the Alps at least, for on leaving Turin you will not see another hound. Formerly there was a public breakfast, and those who were of the hunt and wore the uniform partook of it. It was a hot meal more resembling a dinner than a breakfast, and the hard riding afterwards seldom failed to give me the head-ach. The etiquette observed

here

here in hunting, of not passing the King, might displease a keen sportsman. Whenever I saw Royalty, I took another road. It was at my return from one of these hunts that I met with the accident W—— told you of. The fair of Montcallier was unluckily on the same day as the hunt, and all Turin was assembled there. The road had two lines of coaches returning homewards, leaving an interval but just sufficient for one carriage to pass. I was in an English post-chaise with four horses. My postillions, I know not why, fancied I was in a hurry, and broke the rank,—in consequence of which we presently met an unfortunate man on horseback, who, not having room to pass, was knocked down, and run over; and the struggles of his horse overturned the chaise. The scene was dreadful!—Figure to yourself a carriage overturned—harness broken—a horse killed—a man to all appearance dying—two bleeding figures getting out of the window of the chaise, and two postillions on their knees expecting to be instantly put to death, begging for mercy: a Confessor who was holding up the cross to the dying man, added not a little to the horror of a scene that would make a very interesting picture. Madame de Sevigne relates with infinite humour a story somewhat similar, but as I am not a Bishop, instead of cutting off the man's ears and breaking his bones, I had him taken care of and cured at my expence.

The climate of Piedmont may not please you. It is not unusual for a place that is very cold in winter, to be equally hot in summer. It is the case of Turin. The spring and autumn are the best seasons, and you may then be sure of a good burletta opera. Should you come into Italy late in the year, and intend to pass two winters on this side the Alps, see the beginning of the carnival at Turin, and the end of it at Milan. Pass the summer in Tuscany, the following winter at Rome and Naples; part of the spring at Venice, and as much time as you can afterwards spare in Switzerland.

Private apartments are to be had at Turin, and at the inns good accommodation. The Turinese live more *á la Françoise* than other Italians. The cookery is not bad. You who are fond of trufles will regale on those of Piedmont: it is a pity the smell is not as agreeable as the taste—they make the breath stink worse than onions. It was here, in the year 1765, I met that eccentric genius STERNE—Alas, poor YORICK! many a merry hour have I passed in thy company, admired thy wit, and laughed at thy vagaries!—hours that might have been more profitably employed, but never more agreeably.

The Turinese nobility have many indulgencies: they have one disadvantage; they cannot absent themselves from the kingdom without permission: the policy may be good with regard

to

to Piedmont, yet the being restrained from going where he pleases, is the most severe restriction that can be laid on man. The women are handsome, and are thought to partake of the warmth of the Italian climate. They have no Cicisbeo's, persons whose office I shall explain hereafter, but intrigue *á la mode de France*, whose manners they imitate. Strangers are not ill received by them, but their own officers better; and as the garrison is relieved every two years, the ladies are accustomed to variety. Inconstancy is first occasioned by necessity, and continued afterwards by choice. La Bruyere says, "*Qu'il est plus rare de trouver une femme qui n'eut eu qu'un amant, que d'en trouver une qui n'en eut point eu;*"—though husbands are no longer jealous, all are not equally patient. The Marquis —— having discovered a private door in his garden wall, by which his wife's gallant entered by night, he had it walled up a few hours before the time of his arrival. The lover was punctual, and passed the greatest part of the night in searching after a door that no longer existed;—the lady passed her time not less disagreeably in expectation and disappointment. Early in the morning the door was replaced. The lover swore and intreated, but all in vain; the lady was inexorable; the door gave the lie to all he said, and he was discarded for ever.

If

If you are at Turin on New-Year's Day, you will see the Court-dress of the ladies. It is a curious one, and occasions an extraordinary exhibition of bare bosoms, which unluckily does not become all alike.

Here you will be made acquainted with the amusement of a Corso. It is strait; but, in other respects, like the Ring in Hyde Park, where the beaux and the belles of the last century proudly displayed their taste in horses and equipage.

You dine at two, make your afternoon visits at four, and are in bed by eleven. Pekin is not more quiet at midnight than the capital of Piedmont.* If you can accustom yourself to hours so different from your own, you will find the Royal Family gracious in the extreme; the nobility well bred and courteous; and the society better than in most towns in Italy. Perhaps I am partial to a people from whom I have received civilities, and to a Court from which I have received favors, that I shall ever remember with respect and gratitude. Come, and judge for yourself.

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* At Pekin chains are fixed across the streets at an early hour of the night. Centinels are posted, and patroles go the rounds; nor are any midnight diversions suffered.

LETTER VII.

YOUR route from Turin will probably depend on the time you intend to bestow on Italy. If you arrive in the autumn, and can spare one year only on a country that, to be well known, requires several, you had better take the shortest road by Piacenza to Florence, that you may get to Rome and Naples for the carnival. If, on the contrary, you are not in a hurry, and are in those happy circumstances that permit you to consider amusement and conveniency, and unite pleasure with profit, pass your first carnival at Turin and Milan: in no part of Italy is society so good, nor are Englishmen any where so well received. Here your French will serve you. Study Italian in the mean time under a good master, and make yourself well acquainted with that language before you want it. Your chief difficulty will be with regard to

Genoa.

Genoa. If you pass your summer in Tuscany, the best summer residence on this side the Alps, embark at Leghorn or Lerici, you will not be many hours at sea, and may thus see Genoa with little expence or trouble; otherwise you may go thither immediately from Turin in your way to Parma, or may leave it till you return from Venice; when passing through Milan, you may proceed to Genoa, and either return to Turin, or embark for Antibes. Your motions from Turin being thus uncertain, after that I have said a few words concerning the Piacenza road, I will recollect all I can of Milan and Genoa.

To Piacenza you have sixteen posts. In your way you may see the Palace of Montcallier; where VICTOR AMADEUS, after a busy reign, sometimes fortunate, sometimes otherwise, was made prisoner by his son.

Asti was a Roman colony. Hither the frightened HONORIUS retreated from ALARIC the Goth; and here the brave STILICONE, his General, defeated that Barbarian. In latter times, it was capable of contending with CARLO I. King of Naples, one of the most powerful Sovereigns then in Italy. We may say of Asti as of many other places—Alas, how are the mighty fallen!

Alexandria, so called, not from ALEXANDER

of

of Macedon, but ALEXANDER of Rome,* and out of derision nick-named *Della Paglia* by the Ghibellines, rendered the Guelphs great service. The Emperor FREDERIC BARBAROSSA laid siege to it for many months in vain; it withstood his whole force, and taught him an important truth, that an enemy is never to be despised. Should you pass at the time of the fair, you will find a tolerable opera.† The town is then full of people; and French, Swiss, and German commodities are exchanged for those of Italy and the Levant. At a time like this you must expect imposition. I paid two sequins a day for one room. The man told me with some humour, that at any other time I should be welcome to his whole house for one third of the money.

Tortona was a Roman colony, and even in modern times much more considerable than it is at present.

Voghera is the last town belonging to the King of Sardinia; from thence you may either go to Milan or Piacenza. The direct road

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* Built in the twelfth century, and called after Pope ALEXANDER III.

† The fairs are in April and October.

from

from Turin to Milan by Novara is ten posts and a half.

The pleasant and fertile Vale of Piedmont forms an agreeable contrast with the cold and barren Alps. Mulberry trees, the principal support of its commerce, you will see with satisfaction, whatever be your opinion with regard to the cultivation of rice; a prolific and wholesome food, but the manner of cultivating it is exceedingly pernicious, the stagnated water it requires rendering the air almost pestilential.

The country on this side the Alps was the Cisalpine Gaul, of which the Rubicon was the boundary. The government of it was CÆSAR's portion. The consequence of his having passed that boundary, I shall have occasion to treat of hereafter. This country was afterwards called Lombardy, from the Longi-Bardi. When the Goths were expelled Italy by JUSTINIAN's Generals, the Longi-Bardi, so called from the long beards they wore, natives of Hungary, entered, occupied, and ravaged Italy from one end to the other. Great events proceed sometimes from little causes. It is said, that the Eunuch NARCES introduced this people to revenge himself of the Empress SOPHIA, for a satirical reflection made on his person. They were a hardy, warlike race; but uncivilised and cruel. Under their government, arts, sciences, and letters

ters were in a manner annihilated; and in bad taste, they even out-did their predecessors. War was their only occupation: they burnt the churches, unpeopled the cities, and laid waste the country.

The death of ALBOIN was not less extraordinary than his introduction. It was an usual custom among the Barbarian chiefs to drink out of the skull of an enemy slain in battle. The victorious ALBOIN, at a public festival at Verona, drinking out of the skull of King CUNIMONDE, whom he had slain with his own hand, invited his wife, CUNIMONDE's daughter, to do the same—insultingly adding, that she would then drink in company with her father. The insult was of a nature not to be forgiven, and the cruel tyrant highly merited the revenge that followed. The manner in which it was effected is extraordinary. The insulted ROSAMONDA persuaded ELMOGINO, a favourite of the King, whom she flattered with the prospect of the throne, and bribed, as it is thought, with the charms of her person, to enter into her design on the life of his Sovereign. Unwilling, or perhaps afraid, to take the fatal business on himself, he recommended PERIDEO, an officer of great strength and courage, as the most proper person to rid her of her husband. ROSAMONDA approved of the proposal; but, finding that by words

words she could not persuade him to commit the murder, had recourse to another expedient. She was not ignorant that PERIDEO intrigued with one of her attendants, with whom she concerted matters so well, that, unsuspected by any one, she supplied her place. The usual appointment was given; and the punctual lover, who thought himself in the arms of his mistress, was astonished when he heard the voice of the Queen, who gravely told him, that, after what had passed between them, he had only to resolve either to kill the King, or die himself. PERIDEO was not long in determining, and ALBOIN, who slept after dinner, as is usual in hot countries, was soon after murdered. The tragedy did not end here. The lady, thus liberated from her husband, married the man by whose counsel it had been effected; but shortly after, falling in love with another, ELMOGINO was to be disposed of also. The second expedient was less successful than the first;—she gave him a bowl of poisoned wine as he came out of the bath, which he discovering while drinking, forced her to swallow down the remainder, and in a few minutes both of them expired.

CHARLEMAGNE, about two hundred years after, conquered the Milanese with the rest of Italy. This country was afterwards governed a considerable time by its own Dukes. FRAN-

cois I., till the unfortunate battle of Pavia, was some time master of it. After his defeat, Charles V. gave it to his son Phillip II. of Spain, and in the beginning of the present century it returned to the empire.

LETTER VIII.

THE town of Milan is pleasantly situated in the luxuriant vale of Lombardy; is nearly circular, six miles in circumference, and contains about one hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants. This was the capital of Cisalpine Gaul, and when Rome was on the decline, frequently became the residence of the Emperors. In the time of the Goths it was often attacked, taken, and plundered; in 1162 was entirely destroyed by FREDERIC BARBAROSSA. The present inhabitants, however, may rejoice that their defenceless state renders resistance impossible. Those who cannot conquer, had better not contend.—These may sleep in peace, though an enemy be at their gates, for they have neither the massacre nor famine of another siege to apprehend.

Under the unfortunate circumstances above mentioned it would be needless to enquire after anti-

antiquities. The Duomo is the principal building, and from thence you have the best view of the town. This immense Gothic fabric is in size little inferior to Saint Peter's. Upwards of three hundred years have slipped away since it was begun, and it is not yet finished! yet the fund allotted to that purpose is sufficient were it properly applied. The taste of the building cannot be commended —ornaments are in profusion,—they are continually adding more, and at this rate the more money they lay out, the worse it will appear. It is said there will not be less than four thousand statues. This church is in possession of a famous relic, *il santo chiodo*, a nail, that the Milanese persuade themselves fixed our SAVIOUR to the Cross. They shew you the body of Saint CHARLES BORROMEO.—I never approached a living Prince with half the respect I felt for the dead carcase of that pious Saint, so amiable in all men, and particularly in a Priest, is purity of manners and humility.* The treasure is immense,—they tell you inferior only to that of Loretto. You will be expected to admire the statue of Saint BARTHOLOMEW; the inscription would be more applicable to the

* The motto chosen by that family, and to be seen on all their buildings, is *Humilitas.*

sculptor

sculptor of MARSYAS than the sculptor of VENUS.*

In Santa Maria delle Grazie is The Holy Supper by LEONARDO DA VINCI. It is true enough, as COCHIN remarks, that one of the Apostles has six fingers on his left hand,—an inattention by no means to be credited,—with greater probability may you suppose the original design altered, and that time has since discovered a finger the painter never intended should appear.

Saint Ambrogio is thought by some to be the church which the famous Saint of that name would not permit the Emperor THEODOSIUS to enter, after the horrid massacre of seven thousand Thessalonians, men, women, and children, in cold blood. In this act the good Emperor was not less treacherous than cruel, for they were invited to a race in the Circus, and there surrounded and killed. It has been said, that man at times differs more from himself, than from any other of his kind. This surely was a proof of it. Saint AMBROGIO was much to be commended; but what would an Emperor in times like these say to a Bishop who, with no

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* Non me PRAXITELES sed MARCUS pinxit Agrati.

other

other armour than his sanctity, should dare to oppose his entrance into a church?

The Ambrogian Library stands open to receive you, rich in manuscripts, books, medals, statues, and pictures. The manuscript of JOSEPH on Papyrus, LA LANDE tells us, is one thousand one hundred years old. The manuscripts of LEONARDO DA VINCI are interesting to those who are acquainted with the merit of that extraordinary man; one of the most learned and most accomplished of the age in which he lived. He possessed many talents in an eminent degree. He was as remarkable for his strength as for his beauty; and without doubt the Milanese ladies frequently exclaimed, like the ladies of Babylon, "*Quel bonheur qu'un si beau Garçon ait tant de force.*" * His death was not less extraordinary; for he died in the arms of that amiable Monarch FRANCOIS I., whose private virtues as a man, and personal accomplishments as a gentleman, covered the failings of the Sovereign; and whose protection of the arts has justly endeared him to posterity. In PETRARCH'S Virgil you have a description of his mistress. You know the personality of LAURA has been disputed. I apprehend PE-

* See VOLTAIRE'S Princesse de Babylone.

TRARCH'S own words, written with his own hand, can best settle the controversy. They shew you a comedy, written in the fourteenth century, entitled, *Paulus ad Juvenum corrigendos Mores*: it was not till after DANTE'S time that comedies were written in Italian. The skeleton of the Milanese beauty was left as a legacy to her sex, to shew them, " though they paint an inch thick, to what they must come at last."

The great Hospital, Lazaretto, and Prisons, all deserve a stranger's notice.

The Milanese government suffers the great disadvantage of being subject to the will of a despot residing in another country. I doubt much if the excellence of any governme t can compensate for the want of the presence of the Sovereign. Seven millions of livres travel annually to Vienna, and are never seen again:—money thus expatriated, like a river turned out of its natural course, enriches another soil, while its own languishes through the want of it.

At my first acquaintance with Milan, the Duke of Modena, with the title of Governor, had all the outward trappings of sovereignty; but the power was vested in the Minister Plenipotentiary, the Count de FERMIAN: I mention that time the more readily, that I may pay a just tribute

bute to the memory of a minister who was one of the most amiable men I ever knew.

The executive power is in the hands of a Senate; but nothing material is concluded till approved of at Vienna:—a system more mischievous is not to be conceived; affairs of necessity cannot wait; affairs of importance frequently change their aspect before the answer arrives. If your bailiff is neither to cut nor carry your hay without your order, it is easy to conceive what pretty stuff will be made of it in your absence. If a physician prescribes at a distance, he knows full well that his prescription, however good, may be unnecessary when it arrives; he also is aware, that a change of circumstances may render it hurtful.—Princes, who pretend to more knowledge than human nature is capable of, should read CONDILLAC: he roundly tells them that they are not infallible. Confidence in his servants is necessary in a Sovereign; his best talent, that of employing the most deserving.

Of the laws of Milan, I shall only mention that they never punish the intention, but wait till the act be committed. A man ran after his father with an intention to murder him, but was prevented: they could not punish him because his father was still alive. Corn is not exported

but under proper restrictions. The price of meat is fixed; and monopoly as much as possible prevented. Silk and corn are the principal objects of their commerce; and water carriage is become one of its greatest advantages, though the town was built without any river near it. Trade is seldom at a stand where individuals are rich. The shops in general seem well supplied. The embroidery of Milan is famous, and the equipages are not ill made. As for the beaux arts, I believe we had better say nothing about them.

Literature is neither destitute of friends nor admirers. The Marquis BECCARIA, author of that humane book *Dei Delitti e delle Pene*, first cause of the revisal of the penal laws in Europe, and to whom the offending multitude are obliged for a mitigation of their punishments, is a Milanese. A weekly paper was published by a set of gentlemen in imitation of the Spectator, called *Il Caffé:* it has since been dropped. The common people of Milan are as ignorant as elsewhere. Some Beaux-esprits used to meet every evening to discourse on various subjects of literature, and, to prevent interruption from illiterate intruders, locked their door. Information of their proceedings was soon given to Count FERMIAN, who sent for one of them, and advised

vised him as a friend to act with caution, for it was generally believed that they met to raise the Devil.

Public diversions are not wanting, except in the autumn. It is said, that MILTON took the first idea of his Paradise Lost from a play he saw acted here, called Adam, or *Original Sin*. The carnival is famous, and it is the peculiar privilege of the town of Milan to enjoy it four days longer than any other town in a catholic country. Gay people, after the Tuesday's Ball at Turin and Venice, throw themselves into their carriages, and travel hither as fast as they can, where they find feasting instead of fasting, and an Ash-Wednesday without sackcloth or ashes: for this indulgence the Milanese may thank their good friend Saint AMBROGIO, whose doctrine they follow. They tell you the Sundays, notwithstanding the Careme, were days of festivity at Milan, instead of which they have now a longer carnival; but, to make matters even with the church of Rome, they agree to fast four days in the spring, which those who prefer *Gras* to *Maigre* escape by going out of the diocese. One of the most pleasing *coup d'œils* I ever remember was the ball at court, the last day of the carnival. Figure to yourself a large gallery, filled with well-dressed people of fashion, and a spacious box adjoining, from which you

saw

saw the masks in the theatre—the elegancies of one scene, forming a striking contrast with the buffooneries of the other. The new theatre is no longer part of the palace. I wonder Princes will forego so great a privilege as that of enjoying these amusements in their own palace without inconvenience. The new theatre is said to be a good one: the boxes are large; and it is not unusual to play at cards and sup in them. I can never reconcile myself to card-playing at an opera—*à quoi bon?* it can only be of advantage to a deaf man, who probably would win all the money.

Milan is the only town in Italy where you are invited often to dine,—and here, when once known, you need never dine at home. The Milanese keep excellent tables. L'Abbé ——, a fat priest, who had completely gorged himself at Count FERMIAN'S, accompanied his Excellency to the Corso afterwards. The servants had no little difficulty to get him in at the coach door; but when he wanted to get out again, that was utterly impossible; the servants pulled; the Abbé strove—but all in vain; the heat of the day and jumbling of the carriage had relaxed his muscles, and increased his bulk to such a degree, that they were obliged to leave him where he was till he had digested his dinner.

In the Milanese you will find more German hospi-

hospitality than Italian frugality. In their character you will still find a mixture of Spanish, French, and German manners, and will with difficulty believe yourself in Italy. The climate also may not exactly agree with the ideas you have formed of this warm country: you must not fancy, my good Sir, that when you have once passed the Alps, you are to feel no more cold; Turin and Milan are both of them colder than London.

Gallantry is carried on at Milan more mysteriously than in other towns in Italy; nor are Cavalieri serventi's so generally established: not that I think the Devil is any loser. A coquette, the other day, wrote to two gentlemen, who, unluckily for her, were intimate friends, and compared notes: she had given a rendezvous to each, and to each said she desired nothing so much as to get rid of his rival, who was a *seccatore.** One of them observed, that the two letters were word for word the same. "True!" replied the other; "but with this difference, if you please: in this," alluding to the letter he held in his hand, "in this, my good friend, it is *you* who are the seccatore, instead of me."

See Castellazzo, and the Statue of POMPEY; Mozza, where the Court resides; and the Villa

* A *bore*, or troublesome fellow.

Simo-

Simonetti, for the sake of the Echo: this echo will repeat thirty-five times, according to La Lande; and forty, according to Mr. Martin; but it is the last syllable only: and what is that to another Echo that we have heard of, which, when you ask, "*How do you do?*"—replies, "*Very well, I thank you.*"

LETTER IX.

THE Genoese history is a confusion of events little interesting to a traveller. When Rome was in its infancy, Genoa was the capital of Liguria, resisted while it was able, and submitted unwillingly to the Roman yoke. The friendship of Rome became afterwards more pernicious to the Genoese than her enmity: they embraced her fortunes, and their town was destroyed by the Carthaginians. At the decline of the Romans they fell a prey to the Goths; after them, to the Lombards; till CHARLEMAGNE put a finish to their empire, and made himself master of Genoa, with the rest of Italy. It was not till the end of the eleventh century that the Genoese formed their Republic, which since that time has submitted to more masters, and undergone more changes, than I intend to relate. At the time of the Crusades, the Genoese galleys, by favoring the designs of religious

religious fanatics, established their commerce in the Levant. At Constantinople they had already acquired Pera, as a reward for their services against the Venetians. Corsica had long been in their possession; and Sardinia was a bone of contention between them and the Pisans, till the famous engagement off Melorie gave them a complete victory over their rivals, and at once put an end to the pretensions of Pisa. The violent contentions between the GUELPHS and GIBBELINS,* that kindled a flame of civil war all over Italy, had more than once disturbed the peace of Genoa, and obliged them to accept the dangerous assistance of powerful neighbours, and barter liberty for protection. Milan, Spain, and France became each at different times master of a country it was easy to gain, but difficult to keep.† It was not till ANDREA DORIA, in the year 1528, forsook the

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* The dissentions betwixt GREGORY IX. and FREDERIC II., gave rise to the two factions of GUELPHS and GIBBELINS: the former, embraced the interest of the Pope; the latter, that of the Emperor. *We* have had our Houses of YORK and LANCASTER—not less fatal.

† When the Genoese made an offer of their Republic to LOUIS XI., he replied—"*Vous vous donnez à moi, et je vous donne à tous les Diables.*"

interest

interest of FRANCOIS I. to embrace that of his enemy CHARLES V., and became a patriot through pique, that liberty was restored to the Republic, and a government established which has since suffered little variation. It was once in danger from a young conspirator of astonishing enterprise, the Count de FIESQUE,* who wanted the good fortune only to which his bravery entitled him, to have become master of the lives and fortunes of his fellow-citizens: every thing succeeded to his wishes; he had possession of the town; the enemy fled before him; when accidentally, it was in the night, treading on an unsteady plank to get on board a vessel in the harbour to give some orders, his foot slipped, he fell, and was drowned,—and with him sunk every hope of his party.

In the year 1746, though you cannot remember it, many can, Genoa submitted to the House of Austria. The Marquis BOTTA, a rough German, took possession of the town, and treated the inhabitants with severity. It is imprudent to provoke people beyond bearing:—it is dangerous to drive them to despair.—A trifling circumstance, the ill usage of a citizen by a soldier at the removal of a piece of ordnance,

* This conspiracy happened the first of January, 1547.

occa-

occasioned a revolt which more important considerations had not been able to effect;—the people rose upon the military, and, with no better weapons than sticks and stones, drove the General and a victorious army out of the town, to which they never afterwards dared return. Since that period, the most remarkable events are the struggles of the Corsicans for liberty under our friend PAOLI, and the surrender of that island, which the Genoese could no longer keep, to their allies the French.

The climate of Genoa is mild: green peas, flowers, &c. are not unusual in winter. The town is delightfully situated, is about six miles in circumference, and contains near one hundred thousand inhabitants. The Port is semicircular, and the buildings rise one above another in the form of an amphitheatre. An admirer of fine prospects should take a sea view of the town, and, till he has seen Naples, will conclude no situation equal to that of Genoa. Internal grandeur no otherwise corresponds than in the marble palaces of the nobles, which are in a superior style of magnificence, and has probably given her the name of *superba*, to which, in other respects, she is but little entitled. Though ancient, Genoa has none of those remains of antiquity that render other cities famous; yet a lover of pictures will find employment in every palace,

palace, and in every church: A Lacquais de Place, and that useful book *Guida dei Forestieri*, will shew and explain them. Of the public buildings, the palace of the Doge; the Albergo, where the poor are received gratis; the Grand Hospital, to which the sick of every nation are admitted; and the Bank of St. Georgio, are most worthy your observation. It would be an affront for a soldier not to visit the Arsenal. See also the Galley-slaves; satisfy your curiosity; and let justice and good policy remain silent, while you commend the lenity with which such villains are treated.

The government is aristocratical: the legislative power is in the grand Conseil of all the nobles assembled, but the petit Conseil of two hundred do all the business. In each of these assemblies, in order to carry a question, two thirds of the votes must be in its favor. The executive power is in the Doge, and a Senate consisting of twelve members chosen annually out of the grand Conseil. These are his privy council, and assist him in all his functions. The power of the Doge is little more than that of a president, and his reign is for two years only,—during which time he has constantly two senators at his elbow as spies on his conduct; for eight days afrer he is liable to any charge of mal-administration that may be brought against him; nor can his immediate

diate successor be of the same family. Troublesome as this office is, the confinement of it renders it still more exceptionable. When the Doge was sent to petition LEWIS XIV., he was asked what he thought most curious in France, he replied, " *De m'y voir.*"

Il Collegio dei Procuratori have the direction of the public revenue. Trials both civil and criminal are in the hands of strangers. Though this custom is pretty general throughout Italy, I cannot but think it an invidious system, founded on false principles, and liable to many objections. Censors are appointed to watch over the execution of the laws, and examine into the conduct of the officers. Inquisitors of state have charge of the police. A holy inquisition watch over religious concerns, but give as little trouble at Genoa as in other towns of Italy. There were formerly two distinct ranks of nobility; no other distinction now remains than that which pride makes.

The state is poor,—the individuals rich. The revenue is about three hundred thousand pounds sterling. The Bank of Saint Georgio, which, as a man of business, deserves your contemplation, is the support of the Republic. The land forces of Genoa make no figure in the balance of power of Europe. The naval force of those enterprising mariners was once formidable, till after a severe

severe contest of several years they submitted to the Venetians. It is now reduced to a few miserable galleys, not equal to the protection of their trade against the Barbary corsairs. The soil is so barren that the inhabitants would be starved were it not for the constant supply they receive from other states. To prevent a scarcity of the necessaries of life, bread, wine, and oil, are sold by government, who constantly keep a year's supply beforehand. The profit arising from this manœuvre makes no inconsiderable part of the public revenue. The Genoese, as well as their neighbours of Pisa, once carried on an extensive commerce with the Greeks, and also supplied Constantinople with foreign commodities till that capital was finally subdued by the Turks. Though they have lost in great part the trade of the Levant, they furnish all Italy with the merchandise of other countries.—Velvets, silks, artificial flowers, gloves, preserved fruits, oranges, and lemons, are the principal articles of their own produce.

Of the society I have little to say; I arrived at Genoa in the autumn, when the greatest part of the nobility were at their villas, and the town was too dull to be agreeable. I saw what was most curious, and went away. The principal families seem more at their ease than in other towns of Italy. Like other merchants, they live

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considerably within their incomes, and are attached to the French, who are in possession of their money, the strongest of all ties to a mercantile people. Fine cloaths, and brilliant equipages, make no part of the expence of a Genoese. The noblesse are always in black. The men wear no swords, nor the women diamonds. Chairs, as the streets are narrow, are more generally used than coaches. If a lady walk in the street her chair follows; a servant holds up her train, and she has always one, and sometimes two Cicisbeos to attend her. I have heard of more separations and divorces at Genoa than in any other town in Italy,—divorces for any thing you please, except infidelity.—To make that a legal cause of divorce in this country, would be *ipso facto* to annihilate the marriage state.

The common people have not the fairest reputation, but my short stay among them did not permit me to judge how far they deserve it. It has been said of Genoa, *Uomini senza fede, donne senza vergogna, mare senza pesce*,—too severe to be strictly true.

I shall never forget my journey to Genoa.—I had sent a Felucca from Leghorn with part of my baggage to wait for me at Lerici. Arriving there, as I hate the sea, I thought it pleasanter to ride post over the Appennines,—a journey, I cannot advise any one to undertake, for the roads, horses,

horses, and accommodations, are all of them intolerable. As I approached Genoa, heartily tired of my post-horse, the calm sea tempted me to pursue the rest of my journey, about twenty-five miles, in an open boat. I think it was CATO who said he never repented but of three things :—that he had intrusted a secret to a woman ;—that he had spent a whole day in idleness ;—and had gone by water when he might have gone by land. As to the latter, CATO himself never repented it more heartily than I did in the Gulph of Genoa, where, more than once, I was near going to the bottom. My running footman, who was a Catholic, recommended himself to every Saint in the Calendar, not forgetting his good friend Saint ANTONIO DI PADUA: as for me, I expected death in sullen silence; I had made up my mind to the worst that could happen,—and shall never forget the joy I felt when I entered the harbour—when I cried out, in a kind of extacy—"*Inveni portum ludite nunc aliis*"—for I determined from that instant never to trust myself at sea again in an open boat with Italian sailors.

The office of a Cicisbeo shall be the subject of my next Letter.

LETTER X.

BARETTI tells us, that to whisper was formerly called Cicisbeare: and as the gentleman I am to describe, usually speaks by whispers, he is called Cicisbeo. In other parts of Italy, he is called Cavaliere Servente, a name better suited to the purpose, and which explains itself. He was originally of the husband's choosing, generally one of the family, and seldom either young or handsome. His office was to attend the lady to the theatre, and to be her constant companion in the absence of her husband. Jealousy, without doubt, first instituted this Male-Duenna—who, watchful as ARGUS, and spiteful as the Dragon of the Hesperides, observed the lady's looks, controuled her actions, and returned her at night as pure as he had received her in the morning—and, probably so tired of his company, that her husband became a more welcome companion.—This animal,

mal, though scarce at present, is still to be seen with a bride the first year of her marriage: for as a husband of rank and fashion cannot appear with credit in public with his own wife; nor the lady with propriety go out alone; an inoffensive being, a kind of non-entity, is procured by the family to accommodate both:—but, as matrimony in this country is, generally speaking, a matter of convenience, the husband, in a short time, returns to his former mistress, and Cara Sposa chooses a Cavaliere Servente better suited to her inclinations. This is the person with whom you will have most to do, and this is the Cavaliere Servente, whose office I shall now describe.

The service of this gentleman begins early in the morning, and ends late at night. He has the entrée at all hours—and the bed-chamber of the lady is as familiar to him as to her husband. He assists at her toilette; decides about her dress; jokes with her maid; and plays with her lap-dog. If she goes out, it is his business to accompany her: if she stays at home, he never quits her side; for instinct tells him, whether he has read or not, that with certain persons, and on certain occasions, "*Les absens ont toujours tort.*" *

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* *Vide* La Pucelle—Chant IV.

When dinner-time approaches, the Cavaliere Servente takes his leave.

A frugal repast eagerly swallowed—a toilette easily made—occupy a few hours only, and the Cavaliere Servente returns to his lady with a hasty step lest another supply his place. A *tête à tête* at this hour is usually this gentleman's exclusive privilege. NINON says,—" *Qu' une Liaison du cœur est la Piece du Monde ou les actes sont les plus courts, et les entre-actes les plus longs*"—and no people upon earth experience the truth of the remark more than the couple I am now describing. The Ventitre at length arrives *—the coach is ordered, and they drive up and down the same street, looking different ways; and, for want of conversation, having said all they had to say, bow to every carriage as it passes, till the hour of the theatre.

If the lady goes to an assembly, the Cavaliere Servente takes charge of her cloak, her fan, her gloves, sorts her cards, and sits at her elbow. At Genoa, he follows her chair; in other towns, he accompanies her in her coach: while Jerry Sneak, the husband, walks on foot, let the weather be what it may, his only equipage a pair of

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* The *Ventitre*, an hour before sun-set, is the time of the Corso.

thick

thick shoes, and an umbrella. Wherever the lady is invited, this gentleman is expected. At public dinners he receives a formal invitation; and the husband, unless he be the Cavaliere Servente of another lady, is purposely omitted. The twenty-four hours are thus pretty equally divided between them both; but, as the husband enjoys the lady's company in the dark, when the smooth skin and convenient features of a Negro might better suit his portion than the most beautiful profile Grec, the charms of which are for the contemplation of his rival, it is the height of folly to marry a woman for her beauty only. I don't know that beauty in this country is ever desirable in a wife, as it may occasion uneasiness, after it has ceased to give you pleasure.

An old gentleman asked me, the other day, seriously, if he should marry?—QUIN, on a similar occasion, said—"*No:*" and being pressed for his reason, replied—"*If you marry an old woman, she will stink you out of bed; if a young one, she will kick you out.*"—In Italy, where a wife does not depend on her husband only for her amusements, old gentlemen find better treatment: I therefore told my friend, that he should marry by all means, since probably by so doing he would make more than one person happy. VOLTAIRE recommends matri-

mony

mony pleasantly enough: he says—"*Si votre femme est sage et raisonable vous serez un homme heureux, si elle est mechante, ou coquette vous deviendrez philosophe—vous ne pouvez jamais qu'y gagner.*" Besides, those who marry to have an heir to their estate, the principal object of matrimony in this country, whatever be their age, need never despair. Jealousy, I mean in a husband, is become as ridiculous as a worn-out fashion. The good man submits patiently to his fate, and makes the following prayer:—"*Signore vi prego che la mia moglie mi sia fedele, e se mai non la fosse vi prego che io non lo sappia; e se mai lo sapessi, che non me n'importi un corno.*" *

You will conclude from this account, that female virtue is at a low ebb in Italy:—I see nothing to contradict the idea. Some chaste women, without doubt, there are; but when from a small number are taken those who have no desires; those who have no temptation; and those who, having both, have no opportunity; the quantum of real virtue remaining will be reduced almost to nothing:—such are the per-

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* I pray GOD that my wife may be faithful! if not, that I may not know it.—If I am to know it, that I may not care about it.

nicious effects of bad education, and bad example, in a warm climate!

That a rational being should be found idle enough, both in body and mind, thus to fritter away his whole time in the company of one woman: that a wife should wilfully make herself the talk of a whole town, and submit to the tyranny of a man she is not in duty bound to obey, and oftentimes is afraid to leave, though she has ceased to love:* that a husband should suffer another man to have more influence in his house than he has himself; to enter it familiarly and indecently at all hours, and be privy to the most secret transactions of his family: that Government should look with an indifferent eye on a system of prostitution that corrupts the manners, and at once destroys domestic happiness, filial duty, and parental affection; will probably be objects of astonishment to you, as they have been to me.

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* The change of a Cavaliere Servente is as much a topic of discourse in any town in Italy, as the change of a Prime Minister is in England.

LETTER XI.

PIACENZA, probably so called from its pleasant situation, was a Roman colony in the early days of the Republic of Rome.

In this neighbourhood HANNIBAL fought his second battle after his descent into Italy, and completely routed the whole Roman army under SEMPRONIUS; as he had done the cavalry and light infantry, a few days before, on the banks of the Tesin, under PUBLIUS SCIPIO. It was hither the brave ten thousand made good their retreat, and in such a style, that those who had conquered them dared not oppose their passage. One circumstance renders the retreat of the ten thousand Romans more extraordinary than that of the ten thousand Greeks—*these* were beaten, *those* were conquerors. It was in this battle HANNIBAL lost his eye by the intense cold, and every elephant, as we are informed, one only excepted.

At

At the decline of the Roman empire, Piacenza, by lying in the direct road of every invader, was frequently attacked, and often plundered; yet it held out against TOTILA, till the inhabitants, it is said, for want of provisions, fed upon one another. In modern times, after many revolutions, after having submitted to many masters, it is annexed at last to the Duchy of Parma.

The town is large, but ill peopled; and contains little deserving notice, except the two equestrian Statues of ALEXANDER FARNESE and his SON. The ancient Amphitheatre, which was burnt in the contest between OTHO and VITELLIUS, was the largest then in Italy. You are now on the famous Emilian way, have only four posts to Parma; but have many rivers to pass that are always troublesome, and sometimes dangerous.

Parma was also a Roman colony, and suffered like its neighbour at the decline of the empire. In modern times, this territory has been often in dispute between the Emperor and the Pope, between Spain and Austria. The FARNESE family were in possession of it till their extinction; and, by the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle, it has since been confirmed to DON PHILIP of Spain.

The town is pleasantly situated on a plain, and

and divided by a river into two unequal parts. The circumference may be about four miles, and contains near forty thousand inhabitants. The streets are large, and some of the buildings elegant. In the churches are many famous pictures, by CORREGIO; and the Theatre, by VIGNOLE, is the largest in the world.—When I view the stupendous works of the FARNESE and MEDICI families, I conclude they were men of a different stamp from the Princes of the present day.

The power of the Duke is absolute, and without controul. I passed some time at this Court, during the minority of the present Sovereign, with two amiable friends; the Marquis FELINO, who was at that time Prime Minister, and the Abbé de CONDILLAC; both Frenchmen, and both an honour to their country. No young Prince could be kept more constantly employed: he rose early, and till ten was engaged in study; after that hour he amused himself with drawing; received his Court, heard mass, and dined in public. About one he retired, and took lessons of music; he afterwards either walked, or went out in his carriage. In the evening, the PERE JACQUIER, whose merit is well known, instructed him in mathematics and experimental philosophy.—I fancy these clever men overshot the mark;—the present

Duke

Duke is said to be a bigot, and educated by a CONDILLAC!—and his son is a man of the world, out of the hands of a capuchin!

The revenue of this Prince was about three millions of French livres. His troops did not exceed fifteen hundred: he has not occasion for more; and must depend rather on the protection of his allies, than the strength of his citadel. The smallness of his territory is the cause of continual desertion: you frequently hear a gun fired; it is a signal for the peasants to be on the watch, and they are paid a Louis-d'or for every deserter they bring in. On the Saturday of Pâques, when all the guns were fired, I concluded the whole garrison had deserted at once. The government seems mild, and the people happy. I observed an excellent tribunal, called *La Reale Giunta*, composed of a certain number of Counsellors, men of abilities and honour, who decide civil causes *gratis*; and from whom there is no appeal, except to the Sovereign: but, as they seldom pass any sentence without his approbation, the appeal is nugatory.

In the Academy are antique statues and busts, and the famous Table found at Velleia, a town supposed to have been destroyed by the falling in of a mountain, towards the end of the fourth century. The late Infant took great delight in digging there; but the expence was so great, and

and the things found of so little value, that he was persuaded to desist.

In the Library are drawings engraved by Madame de POMPADOUR; and a curious Manuscript, with the arms of the noble Venetians on one side, and on the other a description of each family, what they originally were; if in trade, or not; and what they dealt in:—very curious and interesting, without doubt, to those it may concern. A Plan of an Attack, which takes to pieces, and shews the whole conduct of a siege, from first investing a town till it be taken, was a present of LOUIS XV. to the present Duke, and is a military treasure. You have heard of a famous collection of Pictures, &c. belonging to the Palace: when Don CARLOS forsook Parma for Naples, he took them along with him.

Not far from the Palazzo Giardino the French gained the battle of Parma, in 1734.

The commerce of the town consists chiefly of silk. The principal part of the cheese which we call Parmesan, is made in the neighbourhood of Lodi. The necessaries of life, I am told, are in great plenty, and not dear; from whence I conclude, the country is well cultivated. The people, in general, have cheerful countenances; a certain sign the Government is mild, and the taxes neither numerous nor oppres-

pressive. The manners of the people are partly Italian, partly French. I found them well bred, and not unlearned. The Abbé FRUGONI was the best Poet in Italy. Count REZZONICO has written a Dissertation on PLINY: an intimate friend of his said, in a joke—"*I begin to think you love* PLINY *better than me.*"—"*Most certainly!*" replied the Count: "*I love you as much as any man living; but I love* PLINY *more.*"

You have heard of the famous Printer, BODONI, rival of our BASKERVILLE. It is possible you may not have seen any of his Works, for he has hitherto been chiefly employed in printing books that nobody reads;—and, though ambition might make me wish to appear to the world as fine as BODONI could make me, I fear I have nothing by me pure enough to pass the review of a Parma Inquisitor. It is curious, that the first printing in Italy should have appeared at Turin, and that BODONI should be a Piemontois.

It was from hence, in the spring of the year 1766, that I sent my running-footman with a letter to Mantua; he could not have set out before six o'clock in the morning, for till that time the gates were not open; the answer was dated Mantua, two o'clock at noon: I received it early the next morning before I was up, and

he

he made many excuses for not returning the same day. It is wonderful what these fellows are capable of doing; but it is cruel to put it unnecessarily to the trial. Remember, should you be in this neighbourhood, that the Octave of the Corpus Domini is one of the most brilliant days at Parma.

Modena, at the time of the Roman Republic, was a place of consequence. Here DECIMUS BRUTUS was besieged. Many curious stratagems were then used by the Consul HIRTIUS, who commanded the Roman army that came to his assistance, to convey intelligence into the town. *Divers* were first employed; and when that scheme was discovered and prevented, they used pigeons with letters fastened to their feet. Here OCTAVIUS first tried his fortune against ANTHONY:—here, in the first engagement, he ran away; and, in the second, is strongly suspected to have murdered the Consul HIRTIUS in the confusion of the battle; and to have poisoned the wounds of PANSA, the other Consul, after the battle was over.—He thus became sole General himself without a rival!

Modena has since undergone various changes, and submitted to many masters, till, at the end of the thirteenth century, it freely gave itself to the House of EST. The Sovereignty is absolute. The territory small. A stranger, who had

had offended the late Duke, was ordered to leave his dominions within twenty-four hours.—He thanked his Serene Highness for allowing him more time than was necessary, for he should be out of them *in as many minutes.*

The town is handsome; the streets wide and regular; and the excellence of the accommodation may tempt you to see the curiosities LA LANDE describes. You may look for pictures that are no longer to be found. The Night of CORREGIO, supposed to be his best performance, is now at Dresden; thirty thousand sequins, they tell you, were paid for it. You will think it an astonishing price for a picture; but you are to recollect, that the buyer and seller were both of them Sovereigns. You will lament the injury Sovereigns thus do their country in robbing it of so great a treasure!—If the Pope could sell all the antiquities of Rome, he would starve one half of the inhabitants. From hence are two roads to Florence, by *Pistoia*, and by *Bologna;* you may take your choice.

LETTER XII.

BOLOGNA is an ancient city mentioned by many of the Roman writers, and has been at all times famous for her love of the arts, and her struggles for liberty. In the thirteenth century *Bologna la Grassa*, so ealled from the fertility of the country that surrounds it, was at the head of a flourishing Republic, till betrayed by private factions it fell into the hands of the Pope, and suffered the various distractions of oppression, revolt, and bloodshed. The BENTIVOGLIO family, the most powerful, were at last entirely suppressed, and the Bolognese gave themselves under certain conditions and restrictions to the Pope for ever, preserving, if not the reality, at least the appearance of freedom. They have no citadel. Their estates cannot be confiscated. They are governed by a Legate, and have an Embassador at Rome. Taxes I am told are moderate; nor can they complain if forty thou-

sand

sand crowns is all they pay to the Pope:—they are not contented; they still remember that they were once free; but forget the turbulencies of the times of freedom.

The town, which is situated at the foot of the Apennines, on the ancient Via Emilia, is of considerable size, but of gloomy aspect; owing, in great measure, to the porticoes with which it abounds—a blemish of so much use, both in summer and winter, that I condemn it with reluctance. You, who delight in walking, will there find the same advantage we horsemen find in the Manage—exercise in all weather. Remember, should you arrive in the night, to send your Courier on before, that you may not be detained at the gate.

The two towers, Asinelli and Garrizandi, are the admiration of travellers who have not seen Pisa. The latter, which is one hundred and forty-four feet high, is said to be not less than eight feet two inches out of the perpendicular. Some tell you, it was the design of the builder; others think, with greater probability, that the foundation has given way. From the top of the former is a beautiful view of Ferrara, Modena, Imola, and Cento.

The Fountain of Neptune, by GIOVANNI DI BOLOGNA, is much admired. A short stay at Bologna will not satisfy a lover of pictures.

You know it is the school of the CARACCI, DOMENICHINO, GUIDO, GUERCINO, ALBANI, &c.: and every church and every palace is full of the best works of those celebrated masters. It would be an endless labour to enumerate them. I shall only say, that the picture of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, in the Zampieri Palace by GUIDO, is alone worth, to a lover of painting, a journey on purpose. My servant, while I was admiring the pictures, was only attentive to the frames, which he said were very fine, and, without doubt, had he had his choice, they would have had the preference. If you collect pictures, it is not improbable that you may meet with some good ones here;—the most noble families are frequently in want of money, and there are moments when they may easily be persuaded to prefer the current coin of the country to a piece of painted canvass. They sell the original; but, to save appearances, place a copy in its stead:—let him, therefore, who is not a connoisseur, be cautious what he buys.

The University was once more renowned than it is at present, particularly in physic; and has produced many famous persons, both men and women: not forgetting TAGLIACOSCI that HUDIBRAS mentions so ludicrously.

The Institute will find you amusement for every leisure moment. This treasure of arts and

and sciences, too extensive for the narrow limits of the present Letter, Count MARSIGLI began, and Pope BENEDICT XIV., better known by the name of LAMBERTINI, continued. Establishments like these are the best monuments that men of genius can leave behind them; and yet Bologna is less famous for its University and its Institute, than for its sausages and its lap-dogs.

In the Library of St. Salvadore is a valuable Manuscript of the Book of Esther, in Pergamena. The stone called *Spongia di Luce*, is a kind of phosphorus peculiar to Bologna, and merits your attention.

The principal authority is in the Legate: the Police and the Revenue are under the controul of the Senate, out of which body a Gonfaloniere and eight Anziani are chosen every two months, to whom the executive power is committed. The administration of justice, both criminal and civil, is entrusted to strangers, who are sent from Rome; the former under the controul of the Legate, the latter under that of the Senate.

The Madonna di St. Luca is about three miles from the town. You should see this Chapel, if not for the sake of the Madonna, at least for the sake of the prospect. The picture of the Madonna, said to be painted by St. LUKE, is brought annually into the town, under a portico built on purpose. The procession, and the

multitude that attend it, must astonish every one who is not a Catholic. We strangers have an additional obligation to the Lady, for were it not for the lights which devotion offers to her image, in the dark streets of Italy, we frequently should break our bones. At the Certosa, and at the Capuccini, I am told, there are some good pictures.

In an island not far distant, formed by the Rhenus, OCTAVIUS, ANTHONY, and LEPIDUS, met and divided between them the provinces of Rome:—there, with the Devil constantly at their elbow, they formed that bloody proscription which doomed three hundred Senators and two thousand Knights, ignorant and unsuspicious of their intentions, to immediate death—a proscription more infamous than that of SYLLA!—That tyrant condemned only his enemies; these villains sacrificed their relations and their friends!—ANTHONY, his uncle; LEPIDUS, his brother; and OCTAVIUS, CICERO—the very man he called Father, and whose counsel he promised to follow!—Luckily for him, CICERO was altogether as vain, as he was deceitful. Some time after, AUGUSTUS wrote against POLLION, who, when advised to reply, said—"*Non est facile in eum scribere qui potest proscribere*"—Let us quit this horrid subject! and rejoice, that, if we do not possess what is called Roman Virtue, our history,

history, at least, will not be stained with the enormous vices that so frequently disgraced it.

Of the society of Bologna I can say nothing. They have a good Theatre; and I suppose lead nearly the same uniform life as other Italians. The common people are revengeful; and, as the Government is weak, and dares not punish, assassinations are frequent. My host of the Albergo Reale gave me an unfavourable opinion of their honesty: his bill, which I still keep by me as a memento, sufficiently shews what an Italian inn-keeper is capable of.—Rogues like these, are worse than highwaymen—they have all the villainy of the character, without the courage. Few travellers make a long stay in either of the towns mentioned in this or my last Letter, where they find no peculiar inducement of climate or diversion to detain them.

At Filicaie, where I slept, it did not a little surprise me to find the hostess an excellent singer. She had a good contralto voice, and not a bad manner. She told us she never had a master, but had acquired some knowledge of music by attending upon the singers, male and female, who are continually passing. You know Bologna is the principal residence of singers unemployed; and it is there the Impre-

sarios of other countries send to engage them. Much as I was surprised to hear her sing, I was still more, to hear her say, that she did not go upon the stage, because she thought waiting upon travellers a more honorable employment.

At Pietra Mala you see an extraordinary phenomenon, supposed to be the remains of an ancient volcano. My next shall be from Florence.

LETTER XIII.

YOU may have read of the twelve cities of Etruria, each a separate Republic, and may not know perhaps that Florence *la belle*, Florence, the present capital of all Tuscany was not thought worthy of being admitted of the number, while Fiesole, the abandoned Fiesole, which in the midst of her present misery, looks down upon her rival with contempt, was one of the most considerable; and, if you believe VILLANI, the most ancient city in Europe—*Fie Sola*, meaning, as he tells us, the only city at that time inhabited. VILLANI, though an excellent historian in what concerns his own time, is not to be credited in all he says. Fiesole was without doubt a considerable city, and by nature strongly fortified. Florence was at that time a Roman colony, founded, it is thought, by the soldiers of SYLLA, while his army was at Fiesole; but it was not till the destruction of that city by the Florentines in the year

year 1010, that she rose to the degree of grandeur she has supported ever since. VILLANI attributes the violent dissentions in the early days of the Republic to the union of two parties diametrically opposite. It was at Fiesole, CATALINE assembled the army that was intended to destroy Rome.

If you read the History of Florence, you will find that Republic torn to pieces by various factions. The most powerful families had their private quarrels, as well as their public differences: and like the MONTAGUES and CAPULETS of the tragedy, kept the town of Florence in continual alarm. The BUONDELMONTE and the UBERTI,—the BIANCHI and the NERI,—GUELPHS and GIBBELINS, were distinctions of party, of rivalship, and contention. The nobles and the people were also in continual opposition. The former were tyrannical and cruel through fear; the latter suspicious and revengeful because they were oppressed. The nobles were not less at variance one with the other. The most powerful families, the ALBIZZI and the RICCI, the PITTI, PAZZI, SODERINI, and MEDICI, were each of them ambitious of governing, and the system of government varied as either of these parties prevailed. Violence and oppression, cruelty and bloodshed, too often disturbed the quiet of the city, and prepared the Florentines

tines for the change they were destined to undergo under the dominion of the MEDICI. On the other hand commerce flourished; arts and letters were encouraged; Greece lent her aid, and Florence became another Athens. As their manners softened they became less enterprising; they had few heroes, but the names of DANTE, PETRARCH, BOCCACCIO, MACCHIAVELLO, GALILEO, CIMABUE, GIOTTO, and MICHAEL ANGELO, are an honor to the historic page.

The town of Florence is situated in a pleasant vale. The surrounding hills are adorned with buildings, and the country on every side is cheerful and agreeable. The air is perfectly dry and wholesome; no dew in summer at sun-set, and you may safely sleep at night with your windows open. Florence is less agreeable in winter; it is very foggy and very cold.

The town is about six miles in circumference. Though the walls are not fortified, there are two fortresses better calculated to intimidate the inhabitants than defend the city. From the Belvedere you have a beautiful and extensive view. The gates are shut soon after sun-set; but the Porta San Gallo, Porta San Niccolo, and Porta Romana, are opened to travellers till twelve o'clock in winter, and in summer at any hour of the night. The inhabitants of Florence do not exceed eighty thousand.

The

The river Arno, which divides the town, is more famous for a bridge of uncommon form and peculiar elegance than for the clearness of its stream. It is Lord LYTTLETON, I think, who calls this a *silver stream!*—any thing but a silver stream, my good Lord! It is as shallow as it is dirty. If the Emperor BARBAROSSA had seen no other, he had been safe enough: he had not been tempted, or he had not been drowned.* AMMANATI was architect of the bridge.† Here a battle was fought at the marriage of COSIMO II. with the Archduchess of Austria, in imitation of the battle of the bridge at Pisa; and the two factions of Santa MARIA and Sant' ANTONIO were sent for on purpose; but it was observed that they fought with less spirit, and dealt their blows more sparingly, than on their own ground. Here they had nothing but the name to animate them. There they were interested to defend the very ground on which they stood, and had all Pisa besides to behold the contest.

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* The Emperor BARBAROSSA, on his march to the Holy Land, tempted by the clearness of the stream, bathed in the river Cydnus, and was drowned.

† This bridge was built by order of COSIMO I., after the flood in 1557. The arches were kept in their greatest extension, the former bridge having been carried away.

Near

Near this bridge, the husband of the famous Bianca Capello was way-laid and murdered. She shortly after became Grand Duchess of Tuscany. With regard to the four statues, representing the four seasons, I cannot agree with those who have commended them.

The streets are in general narrow, but they are straight, and the pavement excellent. The ravages of war, more destructive to the arts than even time itself, have left few antique monuments for Florence to boast of; yet a town ornamented by Michael Angelo and his scholars, cannot be deficient in taste or elegance; and, in the streets are statues that even Rome might envy. I fear were they thus exposed in the city of London, drunken men and idle boys would soon knock their heads off.

The Duomo begun in the year 1298, is a magnificent marble building of Gothic architecture. The simplicity within is admirable, and were it not for the respect which I bear to the arts, I should wish it imitated. Religion in all ages has been their friend. The finest buildings amongst the ancients were their temples, and the finest statues and most beautiful pictures constantly adorned them: yet the gilded dome surely is less calculated for religious purposes than the cloistered cell, where devotion bends the pliant knee, undisturbed by worldly vanities.

The

The porch of this church, when first I knew Tuscany, was a sanctuary for rogues and assassins; they had erected hovels, victuals were regularly brought them, and they were never molested; a practice at that time pretty general all over Italy. I have been almost afraid to enter a church owing to the many assassins I saw under the porch: figures that it was not pleasant to encounter even there.

This astonishing fabric was built in the time of the Republic by a tax on cloth, at the low rate of one soldo per braccio.* Four soldi a day, when the Duomo was built, were equal to twenty at present: one guinea then went as far as five will now. You may judge of the riches of Florence at that time by the size of this edifice. You may judge of its present poverty by observing that the façade has remained ever since unfinished; not but it was lately proposed to the Grand Duke to finish it, and the means pointed out by a man of no inconsiderable merit:—"*By pulling down and destroying the Church of San Giovanni.* The cupola, by BRUNELLESCHI, was a bold undertaking, whether you consider the form, the size, or the manner of erecting it. It was begun in 1400, and it took thirty-four

* A *soldo*, about a halfpenny English.

years

years to finish it. The paintings by GEORGE VASARI represent Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory (for so they tell us), and are worth observing were it only for the gigantic size of the figures, and whimsicalness of the composition: but you will think with me perhaps, that, notwithstanding the celebrity of the painter, they are of no advantage to the cupola. The choir under is abominable, and ought to be removed. The Sachristy is interesting and respectable. Here the wounded LORENZO saved himself, when his brother GIULIANO was assassinated in the conspiracy Dei Pazzi. The time fixed by those villains was during the mass. Some art was used to bring them there together, and not a little cunning in examining, as they walked along, if they had armour on. The signal of attack was the exaltation of the host, and sacrilege was thus united to treachery and murder. It is some satisfaction, however, to think that not one of them escaped punishment, or died a natural death:—even BERNARDO BANDINI, who fled to Constantinople, and sought the protection of BAJAZET, was delivered up by the Mussulman, and hanged at Florence. The villain who aimed the dagger at LORENZO's breast, little knew the value of the life he attempted to destroy; but succeeding ages have since had reason to rejoice that he failed in the attempt.

In

In this church is the portrait of the divine DANTE, who may be said to have created the language in which he wrote. He was free of speech, and easily provoked. When at the Court of Il Signore della SCALA, then Sovereign of Verona, that Prince said to him one day—"I wonder, Signor DANTE, that a man so learned as you are should be hated by all my Court, and this fool," pointing to his favourite buffoon, who stood by him, "should be by all beloved!"—DANTE, highly piqued at the comparison, replied—"*Your Excellency would wonder less if you considered that we like those best that most resemble ourselves.*" His portrait is a satire on those who banished him: but, to make amends for the persecution he underwent when living, a person was appointed to explain his works after he was dead. Thus ROUSSEAU, banished his country, and cruelly persecuted when alive, has since had a statue erected to his memory. Ostracism at Athens was considered rather as a mark of superior virtue, than the effect of criminality; and when a vile and contemptible person, owing to a private cabal, was added to the number, the law was repealed. To say man is an inconsistent animal, might be a truer definition than to say *he is a laughing one.*

You also see the tomb of GIOVANNI ACUTO,

an

an Englishman. He was General in the Florentine service; and is said to have commanded four thousand Englishmen in support of the GHIBELINE party at Florence. He died in the year 1394. I cannot say much for the figure of the General or his horse; yet we are told that at the time it was done, it was considered as a perfect piece of painting.*

Here also are the tombs of BRUNELLESCHI and GIOTTO. The epitaph of the latter does him great honor, and might have been true at the time it was made:—

"Ille ego sum per quem Pittura extincta revixit,
Plus licuit nulli Pingere, nec melius."

He was the scholar of CIMEBUE, and soon excelled his master:—

"Credette CIMABUE nella Pittura
Tenerlo Campo, ed ora ha GIOTTO il Grido."
DANTE.

His children were remarkably ugly. DANTE asked him, how it happened that he who made the children of others so handsome, should have made his own so ugly?—"*Mine*," replied the painter, "*were made in the dark.*"

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* By PAOLO UCELLO.

In

In this church, at Easter, the Archbishop renews and consecrates the Holy Fire; a curious religious ceremony, probably of Pagan origin, for the vestal virgins of ancient Rome did the same, and nearly at the same season. This done, a squib, in the form of a dove, sets fire to a parcel of crackers at the door of the church, to the no small diversion of the populace. The Contadini (countrymen), who assemble in great numbers, consider the prompt execution of this fire-work as a certain sign of a good harvest.—A fire-work at mid-day is an extraordinary sight at least, if not an agreeable one.

The Campanile, by GIOTTO, is not finished. The original intention was to raise it considerably higher. It must now remain as it is.—Great works like these are no longer carried on in a country which has long lost its commerce, and is not famous for industry. I shall say nothing of the figures and ornaments already so amply described: I shall only observe, that it was the opinion of CHARLES the Fifth, that if it were kept covered, and shewn only once in several years, strangers would flock to see it. Here BANDINI, the assassin of GIULIANO DEI MEDICI, when pursued by the friends of the MEDICI Family, saved himself, the door luckily standing open; and, while they mounted the stair-case to seize him, let himself down on the outside

outside by means of a bell-rope, and escaped like a harlequin. It is curious to observe, that he was hanged several years after with the same rope by which he had been saved so miraculously. Conspiracies, even when they succeed, which is but seldom, are generally fatal to their authors. Of the assassins of CÆSAR, not one died a natural death.—In the conspiracy of SERTORIUS, one only escaped punishment; and he led a miserable life in poverty and contempt. From the top of the Campanile you have a good view of the town of Florence.

San Giovanni is supposed to have been built on the ruins of an ancient temple dedicated to MARS. The doors are its principal ornament. Those by LORENZO GHIBERTI took forty years to finish; and so highly were they esteemed by MICHAEL ANGELO, that he thought them not unworthy to be the gates of Paradise. RAPHAEL has copied several of the figures *tali quali*. The two pillars of Egyptian porphyry were a present from Pisa. The Chains are spoils of the Porto Pisano, and taken by the Florentines in 1362. MIGLIORE, a writer of the last century, on viewing these Chains, even then half eaten up by rust, reflects on the destruction time had already made. Thus publicly exposed, they gave great offence to the Pisans, as long as they retained a sense of their former liberty: I

make no doubt a modern Pisan looks on them either with an eye of ignorance or indifference. The Chapel contains a famous relic, the fore-finger of St. JOHN—and here all the Florentines are christened. In the time of VILLANI, the christenings usually amounted to from five to six thousand annually: the males generally exceeding the females from three hundred to five. The number at present is considerably lessened. In 1779, the births amounted to three thousand one hundred and ninety-nine only; of which one thousand six hundred and sixty-one were males; females, one thousand five hundred and thirty-eight.

Opposite this church is a curious monument of Superstition—a pillar erected to commemorate a miracle which happened at the removal of the body of St. ZANOBI from the church of San Lorenzo to the Duomo; an elm that formerly stood there, blossomed, as it is said, in the month of January, at the approach of the body of the Saint. We may say of this miracle as HORACE did on an occasion somewhat similar—*Crêdat Judæus Apélla*, who, by the bye, I conclude was a very silly fellow.*

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* SAN ZANOBI was Bishop of Florence in the fourth century.

LETTER XIV.

SAN LORENZO, in the early days of the Republic, was out of the city, the walls of which at that time were *al Canto della Paglia.* The statues of GUILIANO Duke of Nemours, and LORENZO Duke of Urbino, by MICHAEL ANGELO, are much esteemed. The tomb of ALEXANDER, first Duke of Florence, is interesting. COSIMO prepared the way to despotism, and obtained the respectable title of *Pater Patriæ decreto publico:* this Prince exercised it some years after, and was assassinated.

The Medici Chapel, begun in 1604, was intended by the Grand Duke FERDINAND for the reception of the Holy Sepulchre, which he endeavoured to steal from Jerusalem. The acquisition would have been highly advantageous to the town of Florence, but failing in the attempt, it was made the burying-place of his family. I think it is ADDISON who prophesied that the family

mily would be extinct before the chapel would be finished:—he has proved but too true a Prophet. Foreign marbles were collected at an immense expence, but the chapel is not finished; and now most probably never will be. I shall not enumerate the relics contained in this church, for I much doubt if a tooth of *Santa Marta*, or even the milk of the *Virgin Mary* will do me any credit with a Heretic.

The marble pedestal opposite represents Giovanni dei Medici, father of Cosimo I., and one of the greatest warriors of his time. Brantome tells us that being wounded by a musquet ball in the leg, it was judged necessary to cut it off, and he was desired that some persons might hold him; he said it was unnecessary; and during the whole of this painful operation, held the candle himself.

In the Church of Santa Croce is the monument of Galileo. The fortune of this man was not less extraordinary than his abilities. He was put into the Inquisition at Rome at the age of seventy-five, where he was confined six months for saying that the earth moved round the sun, and was made to retract it in order to regain his liberty; yet so perfectly was he convinced of the truth of his system, that he could not refrain in descending the staircase to exclaim, "*Eppure si muove!*" His body was denied Chris-

Christian burial, and his bones have since been removed into holy ground. He suffered for maintaining a system which, though apparently contrary to our senses, is at last universally allowed. His friends to excuse him, said, that he did not pretend that the earth really moved, but only as God was omnipotent, he might have ordained it so if he had thought proper. NEWTON was born the year that GALILEO died, and fortunately in a country less hostile to science.

Here are the monuments of MICHAEL ANGELO BUONARROTI, and LEONARDO DA VINCI; here also the long neglected MACCHIAVELLO has at last received the tribute he had so long merited;—the inscription is more elegant than the monument:

Tanto Nomini Nullum par Eulogium.
Nicolaus Macchiavelli,
Obit. an. A. P. v.CIↃIↃXXVII.

This laconic inscription bears some resemblance to that of the great FREDERIC, "*Hic Cinis Nomen ubique*," but, with this material difference, the King of Prussia was his own biographer; whereas MACCHIAVELLO has had this justice done him by his countrymen more than two hundred years after his decease.

You are shewn an elegant little Chapel of the Nicolini family. The Cupola and four Sybils are painted by VOLTERRANO. There are also other

other paintings worth your notice, particularly the Limbo by BRONZINO. This church was in danger not many years since of being turned into a stable. If you consider the precious monuments it contains, you will be shocked at the barbarity.

In the cloister is a famous Chapel of the Pazzi family, begun by BRUNELLESCHI, and never finished. It was one of the first attempts at the revival of Grecian architecture in Italy, and not unworthy the fifteenth century. There is a remembrancer of a flood on the third of December 1740, the height six feet five inches English.

On the benches of the Piazza Santa Croce, the inhabitants of Florence pass great part of the night in summer; and here formerly, during the carnival, the Nobles played at foot-ball, and kicked each other's shins to the no small diversion of the populace.

Observe the front of the house of Senator ANTELLI, painted in 1619 by GIOVANNI DA SAN GIOVANNI, and other famous masters. It was finished in twenty days. When fresh it must have had an astonishing effect, and still serves to shew the magnificence of those times, when the very outsides of their houses were adorned with paintings of such uncommon excellence. The original design is in the gallery. BALDINUCIO says, that in his time (sixty years after

after) it looked as fresh as if it were just painted. The wolf, the lion, and the Cupid sleeping, were at that time much admired.

At the corner of the coffee-house you see the height of another inundation, or rather deluge in the year 1557. I made my coachman measure it with his whip, and conclude it cannot be less than eleven English feet. I leave you to judge of the confusion such an accident must have occasioned in a town that is all nearly on the same level. The street near it is still called Via del Diluvio. The water of the fountain in the Piazza is the best in Florence.

In the Cloister of the Annunziata is the famous Madonna del Sacco by ANDREA DEL SARTO, one of his best performances, and the admiration of every succeeding painter. I think it is JOHNSON who says that the distance of a calamity from the present time seems to preclude the mind from contact, or sympathy. The remark is certainly just, and I feel more concern at the declining state of the Madonna del Sacco, than of the Colosseo at Rome.

Belonging to this church is another Madonna not less worth seeing, but now seldom shewn. They tell you the painter, after he had painted the body, at a loss what expression to give the countenance, fell asleep; and when he awoke, to his great astonishment found the whole picture

ture finished! This was a great miracle, without doubt; nor is it often, I believe, that you find a painter silly enough to begin his picture at the wrongend. GIOVANNI BOLOGNA DI DOVEY, sculptor and architect, patronised by Cosimo I., Francesco, and Ferdinand, was buried here.

The equestrian statue of Ferdinand, in the Piazza, is by PIETRO TACCA, scholar of GIOVANNI BOLOGNA, and is said to have been made of the brass cannon taken by the Tuscan gallies from the Turks.—One might ask, where are your gallies now?

In the Rucelai Chapel at Santa Maria Novella, is a famous Madonna by CIMABUE. VASARI tells us, it was at that time so much esteemed that it was carried thither in procession, accompanied by a band of music; and in the cloister of the Spanish Chapel are the portraits of Petrarch and Laura, painted in 1330, by SIMONE MEMMI of Siena. LAURA is cloathed in green, which is said to have been her favourite colour, in which she first won the heart of the unfortunate PETRARCH. SIMONE is celebrated by that author, as are CIMABUE and GIOTTO by DANTE. This was the favourite church of MICHAEL ANGELO. He called it his *sposa* (spouse). I find it is with churches as with women. The old story, *de gustibus non est disputandum.* This convent is famous for perfumes and essences.

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In the Church of Ogni Santi they shew you the tomb of AMERIGO VESPUCCI, and near it is the house he inhabited. This gentleman had the honour of giving his name to the New World, though CHRISTOPHER COLOMBUS was beforehand with him in the discovery. It is not a little extraordinary that Italy should not possess one foot of land in all that immense territory; and that the heir of AMERIGO VESPUCCI should be one of the poorest gentlemen in Florence; VESPUCCI has a pension of twelve crowns a month from Government.—A poor pittance for the descendant of a man who claimed the discovery of a new world.

Santo Spirito, by BRUNELLESCHI, is a Convent of Augustine Friars. The Cupola is said to have been his *coup d'essai* before he attempted that of the Duomo.

San Marco is pretty, but has an impertinent kind of finery about it that little becomes a place of Divine worship. The renowned PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA was buried here. He is called by PAUL GIOVIO, the Phœnix of his time; yet I don't find that his ashes have produced any other such. This convent also is famous for perfumes and essences.

In the Piazza was formerly the Seraglio of wild beasts: and here was once seen a Giraffa alive, sent as a present to LORENZO DEI MEDICI from

from SALDANO, King of Egypt, in 1487. This uncommon animal, whose existence has been doubted, was first shewn in the Circus at Rome, when CÆSAR was Dictator. HORACE calls it Panther Camel.

A Manage has since been wisely established at St. Marco, instead of the Seraglio; but, as the Grand Duke LEOPOLD sets little value on that useful science, and had as soon ride a mule as a manage horse, lessons of horsemanship are no longer given: nor are any of those exercises now encouraged that were once thought a necessary part of the education of a gentleman. It was in the reign of the Grand Duke FRANCESCO, that sixty young men of the first families in Italy, were sent to this Court as Pages for the benefit of their education.

LETTER XV.

PALAZZO VECCHIO was the seat of Government in the time of the Republic. There the ALBIZZI, RICCI, PAZZI, PITTI, SODERINI, and MEDICI, assembled. The Saloon is not unworthy of them. The ceiling is painted by GIORGIO VASARI; as are the paintings in Fresco, intended to commemorate the heroic actions of COSIMO DEI MEDICI. Most of the statues are by BANDINELLI. At a window of this palace, I believe that over the Dogana, the Bishop SALVIATI was hanged in his robes, when GIULIANO DEI MEDICI was assassinated. He had a principal share in that conspiracy. He and his attendants had entered the Palazzo Vecchio, where the magistrates were assembled, on a pretence of business from the Pope, but with the intention, had the plot succeeded,

ceeded, to have massacred them all. The people, exasperated at his villainy, when thrown down from the window, tore him piecemeal. The Pope excommunicated the Florentines for hanging the Bishop; and they in return excommunicated the Pope for taking his part.—The reasons they give are excellent; the book is scarce.

The business of Government is still carried on in this palace. Here the Prime Minister SERRESTORI took possession of the Duchy of Tuscany for the Arch Duke FERDINAND, second son of the Emperor PETER LEOPOLD, before he arrived from Vienna. Illness prevented me from attending the ceremony; but, from the account I had of it, Sovereignty in this country is bestowed from father to son with as much ease as stock is transferred in England from one broker to another.

The Clock in the Tower shews the hour at night, by means of a light artfully placed behind the dial: an useful contrivance.

In this Tower, COSIMO *Pater Patriæ* was confined. His purse, which opened his prison-doors, enabled him soon after to overturn the liberties of his country.—CICERO obtained the honorable title given to COSIMO, for having *saved* the liberties of his country; the Florentine

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merchant, for the exertion of qualities that in the end destroyed them.

The equestrian statue of Cosimo I. in the Piazza, by Giovanni Bologna, was put up by order of the Grand Duke Ferdinand, in 1594. That of Henri IV. on the Pont Neuf at Paris (a silly name, by the bye, as it cannot be always applicable), was a copy by the same artist, and intended as a present to the French Monarch, who had married his niece. Neither Henri, Ferdinand, nor the Sculptor, lived to see it finished. Pietro Tacca, a scholar of Giovanni Bologna, put the last hand to it by order of Cosimo II.; and, though of no extraordinary excellence, it was received with the utmost fanaticism by the French nation, in memory of the beloved Sovereign it was meant to represent, whose virtues were brilliant, and whose very frailties, amiable.—Thither they repair in their distresses to invoke the aid of a Prince, who when living, was the father of his people—a more natural application, let me tell you, than to St. Antonio di Padua. I admire the fanaticism of the French! I approached the statue with respect; I viewed it with concern; and cursed the hand of the assassin who thus cruelly deprived the world of its brightest ornament!—and had rather have been the man who passed the Edict of Nantes, than he who repealed

repealed it—though one died in his bed, and the other was assassinated.*

The fountain is by AMMANATI. The statue of Hercules is by BANDINELLI; and was put up by order of Duke ALEXANDER, as a companion to the David of MICHAEL ANGELO. One of the Lions on the steps at the Loggia is Grecian, the other Roman. The figure of Silence is admirable; her companions, probably, are portraits: all are antique; and were once in the Villa Medici at Rome. The other three capital figures are by DONATELLO, BENVENUTO, and GIOVANNI BOLOGNA. The Judith, cutting off the head of Holophernes, was originally in the Medici (now Riccardi) Palace, and removed hither at the death of ALEXANDER, as a symbol of liberty.—One would think they had hardly time to remove the statue, and add the inscription—*Publicæ Salutis Exemplum Civ. Pos.*—so quickly and so readily did they again surrender their liberties to COSIMO!—DONATELLO was the restorer of sculpture, and much esteemed: it was his good fortune, that the Grecian statues which at present adorn Italy

* HENRY IV. passed the Edict of Nantes for the Toleration of Protestants who were called Hugonots. LOUIS XIV. repealed it.

then

then lay under ground. The Perseus was ordered by Cosimo I., and valued by Bandinelli at sixteen thousand scudi d'oro: though I do not find, in the Life of Benvenuto, written by himself, that he ever received more than three thousand; he was promised ten. The Rape of the Sabine was undertaken by Giovanni Bologna, to prove that his talents were not confined to a single figure only. The three ages are there represented with great truth and expression. Carlino Ginori, a gentleman of extraordinary size, is said to have served as a model for the soldier.

The Piazza, which was of gravel, has been lately paved. It has now an air of grandeur and magnificence suited to the edifices that surround it. The money was well laid out: but, when I pass the Santa Crocê Gate, I cannot equally approve the twenty-six thousand crowns which the community are laying out on a parcel of pig-styes. Ancient edifices are left unfinished, while buildings of little or no importance, and without taste or elegance, spring up like mushrooms.

This is the most lively and most populous part of the city. Here, on the day of Saint Romolo, you may see a curious cart-race, a burlesque on the ancient Circus. The Judge, a facchino (porter), is dressed like a Roman Emperor,

peror, and has his train-bearer and other attendants; intended probably, in the time of the Republic, as a satire on Sovereignty.* Here the idlers of Florence daily resort; and here punches and mountebanks frequently collect together the gaping multitude: but the Grand Duke, out of a mistaken policy, discourages merriment, and does not suffer them to remain. —The MEDICI family! why are they regretted? Was property more secure, or personal safety more respected? Were the laws more favorable to the subject, or taxes less oppressive under their government?—Most certainly not: but, in lieu of these things, the people had an appearance of liberty, and were amused.—Those cunning rulers knew that to keep the minds of men constantly amused, is the surest means to prevent them from criticising the conduct of those who govern. The very poorest and most miserable had neither leisure nor inclination to brood over their wants, or their misfortunes. Let us suppose, for an instant, their time divided between sleep, work, and amusement: if amusement, of whatever nature it be, is considered as four hours in the twenty-four, it may politically

* The representation of this farce has lately been suppressed.

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be considered as six, from the effect it has on the mind both before and after. It is not at balls and theatres that conspiracies are formed: nor was it the merry ANTHONY, but the gloomy and thoughtful CASSIUS, that CÆSAR feared.—Despotic rulers! would you live without fear, conceal your power, and amuse your people. AURELIUS, to keep the people in submission, provided plenty of bread and amusements. He used to say—"*Mind only your amusements, leave to us the care of providing for you.*"

Pitti Palace, the present residence of the Sovereigns of Tuscany, was built by LUCA PITTI in 1460, and bought by COSIMO I. in 1549. It was the ruin of LUCA PITTI, who had the foolish vanity to rival in expence a richer man than himself, COSMO DEI MEDICI. It is an immense building, by BRUNELLESCHI: and when I consider that a private gentleman built it for his own residence, I am concerned to think that the King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, my much honored Sovereign, should be so indifferently lodged. This magnificent fabric is still unfinished, and, of course, has an awkward appearance in the midst of its grandeur. On one side I see a want of symmetry in the parts, that I am astonished a Sovereign should look at twice and not remedy. —As I advance, I find an apartment lately add-

ed, which, differing in every respect from the palace to which it is annexed, destroys at once the beauty of the edifice. Princes I see are not exempt from the natural failings of humanity. Like us inferior beings, they also may say—"*We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and have done those things which we ought not to have done.*"

Several ceilings are admirably painted by PIETRO DA CORTONA:—I am concerned when a good painter employs his art where it is not possible to view it with satisfaction. The Madonna della Seggiola, by RAPHAEL, were it the only picture, would render this palace famous: though I conclude, from many of the paintings of that great artist, that he had not always the most beautiful models. In the same room is the famous portrait of LEO X., by the same master. You will see a copy of this picture at Capo di Monte at Naples, by ANDREA DEL SARTO; not less remarkable from being that which GIULIO ROMANO, scholar of RAPHAEL, and himself an excellent painter, mistook for the original picture. VASARI says, the mistake had not been discovered, had he not been present when ANDREA copied it: and, the other day, FABRINI, a Florentine artist, carried a head to the Marquis MANFREDINI, as an Andrea, which, being approved as such by the

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Chevalier ——, was hung up in the Marquis's cabinet of Old Masters as a true Andrea. It has since been proved to have been painted by FABRINI himself. This was an admirable piece of revenge on the Chevalier ——, who had spoken contemptuously of him as a painter. Where so many pictures are good, I know not which to mention. The Four Philosophers, by RUBENS, and the Two Children, by the same hand, you will look at with pleasure. The Venuses of this painter are less perfect. He copied his own Wives, and they unluckily had more of the Flemish *enbonpoint* than Grecian elegance. The Cupids of ALBANO were copied from his own children, and they were handsome. Though the colouring of the Three Fates, by MICHAEL ANGELO is faded, the outline is admirable. Among many excellent portraits of TITIAN, is that of his Mistress: the head is the same as that of his Venus in the Gallery, the features of which are by no means suited to the character, and have done all they could to spoil the picture. It is clear Titian was a lover, as well as a painter. In the last room, you see a representation of Death, of the Resurrection, of Hell, and of Paradise, by the Chevalier NASINI, of Siena—a Knight of little gallantry, for his best and principal figure is that of a woman falling headlong into hell-fire. Many of the

rooms are small, and some are dark. I don't think the taste in fitting them up will every where please you.—A parcel of naked boys over the doors, in white stucco, look cold and shivering in rooms hung with red damask, and covered with pictures. The best part of the furniture is the inlaid tables in Pietra Dura, a work of great labour and great expence. It is difficult to say which is most admirable, the materials, or the workmanship. The old-fashioned cabinets are monstrously ugly: and the glass-cases, stuffed with baubles, are fit only for children. Should you be at Florence when the Court gives a fête, and see these apartments illuminated, it will then appear like the palace of a Sovereign.

I cannot quit this palace without acquainting you, that in the passage is placed a trunk for secret information, of which the Grand Duke himself keeps the key. The Florentine character is not free from malevolence—judge then of the calumnies it contains!—A vulgar saying tells us, that listeners seldom hear any good of themselves;—and this Prince often finds the severest satires against himself: upon this occasion they generally use printed characters to avoid discovery.

The Corridore, which reaches from hence to the Gallery, is a piece of magnificence worthy

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the family of MEDICI. It has been the occasion of more than one amour. Here COSIMO I. first saw CAMILLA MARTELLI, fell in love with her, and married her: and here the Cardinal his son, when Grand Duke of Tuscany, intrigued with VIOLANTE MARTELLI, CAMILLA's niece.

It was in the Cortile of this Palace that the Grand Duke Ferdinand gave a superb festival at his marriage. A castle was besieged, and taken from the Turks. The Duke of MANTUA, and others the first personages of Italy, engaged afterwards in a tournament: and here, to conclude the festival, the company after supper were agreeably surprised to behold a lake, where they had so lately been witnesses of a siege; and a naval fight, on the very spot where knights had engaged on horseback. This magnificence ended with the family of Medici.

At one end of the Cortile you read an inscription to the memory of a Mule that worked at the building, and which MONTAIGNE, in his Description of Florence, tells us was then living.—It is but just, where the greatest part of the labor lay, that there also should be some of the honor.*

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* Lecticam, Lapides et Marmora, ligna, Columnas,
Vexit, conduxit, traxit et ista tulit.

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The Garden of Boboli was open to the public only three days in the year. It is now, thanks to the liberality of the present Sovereign, constantly open at all times, and to all persons.

I have just heard of the death of a young man of my acquaintance, drowned in the river: a summer seldom passes without accidents of this kind. All animals, except man, swim naturally. BROWNE says, it is because they use the same action in the water, they do on land.—We must be taught; and a frog is the best master. It is a necessary precaution: and yet it may be a doubt of which die most—of those who can swim, or of those who cannot.

LETTER XVI.

THE Riccardi Palace, built by COSIMO Pater Patriæ, was the residence of the MEDICI family, till COSIMO I. removed to Pitti. It was begun in the year 1430, from the plan, and under the direction, of MICHELOZZO. Duke FERDINAND sold it to the RICCARDI family in the year 1659, for forty-one thousand crowns. The low windows of the Terreno were afterwards added by MICHAEL ANGELO; high windows were in fashion during the time of the Republic, as a security against the populace. The Palazzo Strozzi seems built to stand a siege—an incontestible proof of the strange turbulency of those times of freedom.

Here ALEXANDER, first Duke of Florence, was assassinated by LORENZO, his cousin, while he expected a mistress which that villain, his familiar friend, and instrument of his pleasures, had promised to procure. It was late in the evening,

ing, and at the time of the carnival. The Duke, who was much fatigued, was desired by LORENZO, in whose apartment he was, to repose himself on the bed till his return. The unsuspicious Sovereign readily complied, and, falling asleep, the villain soon after entered—not with the beautiful GINORI, but with another cut-throat as cruel as himself,—and the bloody deed was done, though not without difficulty, for the first stab not being mortal, the contest, though unequal, was continued a considerable time. Duke ALEXANDER was a natural son; his mother was of mean birth: there have been different conjectures who was his father. He obtained the Dukedom by means of the Emperor CHARLES V., whose natural daughter he married. They tell you, for the Italians are fond of the marvellous, that the number *six* was particularly unlucky to him: that he was twenty-six when he was murdered; that it was on the twenty-sixth of January 1536—at the sixth hour of the night—in the sixth year of his reign;—and they even go so far as to say, that he received six wounds also!—LORENZO IL TRADITORE, for so he was afterwards called, is said, by one act, to have effected three things directly contrary to his interest and intentions:—he killed the man who loved him best; made Duke of Florence his most inveterate enemy; and ren-

rendered the condition of his country worse than it was before. He was assassinated himself, twelve years after, at Venice, by order of Cosimo I. His two assassins received a reward of one hundred crowns a year each, were made citizens of Florence, and *rimesse due teste;* which I suppose means a liberty to murder two other persons. Assassinations were venial sins in those days; and the murder of one man was pardoned by the murder of another. A murderer, for instance, who escaped from justice, was not suffered to return, unless he killed, with his own hand, a rebel, or another murderer: thus he who committed one murder, suffered death; while he who committed two, was entitled to a pardon!

Many magnificent festivals have been given in this palace, once the residence of Kings, Emperors, and Popes. Those times are now no more; nor does it seem probable that the present proprietor should ever receive such guests. A collection of medals, the famous Pliny, and a ceiling by LUCA GIORDANO, are the principal remains of its ancient grandeur. This palace, as well as that of Pitti, was built by a private person. The private gentlemen of those days were more magnificent in their ideas than princes are at present.

The Palazzo Strozzi, built by BUONTALENTI

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in 1489, is an immense building, and the Cortile magnificent. It contains but few pictures; one of the best is by TITIAN.

These three palaces are all of the Tuscan order: an order more massive than elegant; and, one might think, better suited to a prison than a palace. When PITTI began, he boasted that the windows of his palace should be larger than the doors of that of COSIMO: and FILIPPO STROZZI said he would build another that should surpass them both. Observe these three palaces with attention, built nearly at the same time by three private gentlemen of Florence, and name me three such, if you can, in any other town in Europe.

Palazzo non Terminato of the Strozzi family is by various architects. The lower windows, as also the front towards Il Borgo degli Albizzi, are by BUONTALENTI.

The Corsini Palace is admirably situated on the Lungarno, and contains sevèral good pictures, particularly that of a Muse, by CARLO DOLCI.

The Gherardesca Palace has the advantage of the country, and the pure air of Fiesole. TOMMASO BONAVENTURI DEI CONTI DELLA GHERARDESCA, Archbishop of Florence, when Vicario, has the following anecdote related of him: A widow lady, with three children, threw herself at his

his feet to implore his protection, a neighbouring gentleman having commenced a law-suit to deprive her of an estate which was the only support of herself and family: he listened to her complaint, heard her reasons, which he thought so satisfactory that he assured her *she might be perfectly easy, for her cause was a good one.*—It however happened, that the adverse party shortly after produced such convincing proofs in his own favor as obliged the honest VICARIO to pass sentence against the widow, and deprive her of her possessions; recollecting, however, what had passed between him and the lady, and the assurance he had then given her, he sent for the gentleman and bought the estate. When the widow returned to relate what had happened, and make known her distress, he received her with these words—"*Notwithstanding, Madam, what passed between us when I saw you last, and the assurances I then gave you of my protection, justice has obliged me to pass sentence against you; and charity now requires I should make you the best amends in my power: dry up your tears—console yourself, and accept this new title to the estate, which now is honestly your own, and nobody can deprive you of it.*"

In the Gerini Palace is the famous portrait of Rembrant. You will admire the St. Andrew of CARLO DOLCI. You will be pleased with the

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St. Sebastian by GUERCINO: I suppose it to be St. Sebastian; but as he is unbound, and holds the arrows in his hand, which it is usual to see stuck in his body, the painter leaves the matter somewhat in doubt, which is never so well expressed as when it cannot be mistaken. The Sebastian of GUIDO, though a horrid subject, may be looked upon with delight. Should you be inclined to criticise the elegant ease of the attitude, and the unnatural serenity of the countenance, you have only to recollect that Sebastian was a saint.

The Casa Altuiti possesses an inestimable treasure in the portrait of Raphael, mentioned by VASARI. The family have been tempted by great offers; but nothing short of absolute necessity would excuse the parting with a portrait of RAPHAEL painted by himself.—We should be cautious how we dispose of any thing for money, that money cannot procure again.

In the Casa Rinuccini is a drawing of Mengs, a descent from the Cross, that cost a thousand crowns. It was one of the last of his performances.

The Pretender inhabited for several years the palace now belonging to Duke St. Clemente. The terreno, or ground-floor, where they live chiefly in summer, is excellent. A ceiling by VOLTERANNO has great merit.

Palazzo

Palazzo Bartolini is by Baccio d'Agnolo.

In the Casa Buonarrotti you see the principal occurrences in the life of the famous Michael Angelo Buonarrotti, painted by his scholars: also some of his designs unfinished, and his bust, by Giovanni Bologna. The family still live here; but since his death have prudently declined having any thing to do with the arts. It is said there is a particularity attending this family worth remarking. For six succeeding generations the heirs have alternately been distinguished by talents and by stupidity. The present heir is a man of genius, but to a great degree eccentric, and is sent out of the country. The son of the famous Michael Angelo was little better than an idiot. I have heard an instance of the same kind in one of our English families; but I shall not name it, as I do not recollect whether the present gentleman is a man of genius, a madman, or a fool.

In the Palazzo Salviati, Cosimo I. was educated under the direction of his mother, Maria Salviati. As I know nothing to commend in the palace, I will relate an anecdote of one of the family. A friend of this gentleman decoyed into the palace, and delivered into his hands, a professed and inveterate enemy, thinking to render him an essential service; to whom he sternly replied—*That no advantage, however great,*

great, should induce him so grossly to violate the laws of hospitality, as to put a defenceless man to death under his own roof, though an enemy!—Who would not wish to call such a man his friend!

At St. Gaetano is a small house of beautiful architecture, by MICHAEL ANGELO: but the houses in general, with two or three exceptions, have little to recommend them on the outside; and within are better calculated for summer, than for winter. I think they told me at the Riccardi Palace, that they had thirty-two rooms on one floor, and only two fire-places: perhaps they have found out, that chimneys occasion more cold than heat.—In good truth, unless great fires are kept in them, and it is not the fashion in this country, they are neither more nor less than holes in the wall, and do more harm than good: in short, I verily believe you would be warmer at Petersburgh in winter, than at Florence; you must not expect the warm comforts of colder climates; doors and windows are not made to shut like snuff-boxes, and the north wind when it blows, is most severely felt. For my own part, I was never more sensible of the winter's cold than in this warm climate, partly from the houses being so ill calculated to resist it, and partly from the excessive heat of the mid-day sun; your pores are open; you

are chilled afterwards in the shade, and frozen in the wind. To this may be attributed the *Mal di Petto* (inflammation on the lungs), to which Florence is particularly subject: it is not less subject during the winter months to *accidentes* (apoplexies): but the air is so pure, and so dry in summer, that all sleep with their windows open; and I have often thought, that, with the greatest ease, every house might be robbed at any hour of the night. Italians are not much troubled with the gout; partly owing to their abstemiousness, and partly, perhaps, to the warmth of a climate which promotes perspiration without the aid of violent exertions. MARK ANTHONY was afflicted with it; but he was a jolly fellow, and owed it most probably to his own intemperance. England has lately suffered a great loss from that disorder by the death of Lord CAMELFORD. He left Florence for Pisa with the gout upon him, and died immediately on his arrival. I know not if you were as well acquainted with his value in private as in public life; he was truly amiable in both. As a man of the world, his gentle and engaging manners endeared him to society, and will cause him to be long regretted by all who knew him.

In a country more famed for economy than expence, you will not expect to find elegant furniture. One apartment is usually fitted up

new

new at the marriage of the eldest son; but even then the floors, which are of brick, are not covered with carpets: the windows are not better glazed than an English cottage; nor does it equal in taste or elegance an indifferent hotel in Paris. Footmen do the work of house-maids in every town in Italy; nor are the insides of our houses as clean as the yard of a Dutchman.

I have just been in company with a young man whose history is particular:—his mother is his sister. A gentleman who had a natural daughter, put her into a Conservatorio at Venice, and left the country; returning several years after he met this girl by accident, fell in love with her, and married her. He has lately discovered, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that he has married his own daughter.—Signor CARLO DE P—— is the unfortunate offspring of that unnatural connection.

LETTER XVII.

THE elegant building of the Uffizzi, by G. VASARI, was intended by COSIMO I. for the different offices of the state.* It is to his son FRANCESCO, who succeeded to the Dukedom, that we are obliged for the first establishment of the Gallery. The Tribune, by BUONTALENTI, was added by his order: and hither, under the direction of that excellent artist, were removed the statues, pictures, medals, &c. of his ancestors.

FERDINAND, who, during a long residence at Rome as Cardinal, increased that love of the arts which was natural to him, added to the building, and improved the collection. The St. John, by RAPHAEL; the Madonna della Seggiola; the Portrait of Leo X.; and the

* Was built in the year 1564.

famous Diamond, of one hundred and thirty-nine carats; are proofs of his taste and his munificence.*

FERDINAND the Second followed the example of his predecessors. The Hermaphrodite; Cupid and Psyche; the famous Idol in bronze; and the Venus of TITIAN; were owing to his liberality.

You will little imagine that it was to the intemperance of COSIMO III. the Gallery owes its greatest ornament. When advised by his physicians to walk a great deal, his ministers took that occasion to propose the Gallery; and the famous Venus, the Lottatori, Arrotino, and Antinous, were brought thither from Rome, and many others of less note from the Pitti Palace and Garden of Boboli.

I have thus slightly traced the Gallery of Florence from its first establishment, and have mentioned the names of those illustrious personages to whom it has been most particularly indebted. It now remains to say, that the judicious arrangement of this treasure of the arts was left to the Grand Duke LEOPOLD, to whose kind auspices it owes its present favorable

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* Valued by TAVERNIER at four hundred and thirty-five thousand crowns.

form;

form; and by whose liberality artists of genius daily improve by copying the most celebrated paintings of the best masters. It is thus private collections, in good hands, become of public benefit.

To describe the various beauties of the Gallery of Florence would infinitely exceed the limits of a letter. My remarks will be very confined; but there are printed books that will supply the deficiency.

If you are an admirer of the arts, you will first pay your court, without doubt, to the MEDICI family, to whose taste and magnificence we owe this inestimable treasure. Their Seven Busts are very properly placed in the Vestibule, with inscriptions, which, if your Latin be not forgotten, you will do well to read. As you are a Jockey, you will look with a curious eye for the names of some racers of antiquity, as famous I suppose, in their time, as HEROD and ECLYPSE. As you are a Sportsman, the Two Dogs that guard the entrance are entitled to your regard.

The best pictures are not in the Corridore. The portraits of great personages and famous men, are most of them indifferent copies, from whose features it would be difficult to trace the tenor of their lives. That of MARY, Queen of Scots, does by no means agree with BRAN-

TOME's description of her: he says, she wore false locks, and of different colours; and that no man ever beheld her person without admiration or love. The Busts and Statues of the Emperors and Empresses merit all your attention. Those who are acquainted with their histories and their vices, will nicely examine the different characters of their countenances; those who are not, may admire the sculpture; and ladies will remark many head-dresses similar to their own. Young NERO was a beautiful boy, no feature in that countenance indicates cruelty, or tyranny. It is also to be remarked, that, for many years of his reign, NERO was the best of Princes; and so perfectly humane, that when an order for the execution of a criminal was brought him to sign, he said—"*He wished he knew not how to write!*"

ADRIAN was the first Emperor who wore a beard. Before his time, their chins were kept as smooth as our own; but the means they used are not so well known. Admire ANTINOUS; his face and figure might have excused any other frailty except that of ADRIAN.

Among the ladies, AGRIPPINA claims your attention: a majestic ease in her deportment, bespeaks an Empress who for several years, both as wife and mother, governed those who

governed

governed the world. Her ambition, her vices, and the manner of her death, merit some reflection.

Observe the head-dress of MARCIANA, TRAJAN's sister—the same pin the Contadina's now wear, supports her tresses behind, and the fore part is composed of a false toupee, and, in my opinion, not very becoming. JULIA, POPPÆA, and the frail Daughter of ANTONINUS PIUS, were the beauties of ancient Rome.

You see a Vestal Virgin with the fire burning. You have read much of the *lata Clava;* you may see it in a statue a few paces from the entrance. Observe, as you proceed, the decadency of the Arts, and the astonishing difference between the ages of AUGUSTUS and CONSTANTINE.

The Chimera, half Lion, half Goat, with an Etruscan epigraph which nobody understands, was found near Arezzo, in the time of COSIMO the First.

The Horse is thought to have belonged to the family of NIOBE. I cannot commend his shape, and the part that has been restored is abominable. The snaffle then in use differs but little from our own.

The Wild Boar is a wonderful piece of Grecian sculpture. It was a little damaged by the fire in the year 1762, which threatened destruction to the whole collection.

In an inner room you see the Bolla which the young Patricians wore till they came of age; they were nearly in the form of a heart, and were usually of gold.

Among the Busts, that of CICERO with the wart on his cheek, merits your attention—a ridiculous mistake of the sculpture: it was the name he inherited, not the wart. The ALEXANDER is beautiful; and whether he be lamenting the death of his friend CLITUS, or that he has no other world to conquer, cannot be too much admired. It has been remarked, that his hair is in imitation of that of JUPITER, whose son he wished to be thought. The conquests of ALEXANDER seem even more extraordinary than those of CÆSAR, if you consider the inferiority of the means by which they were effected:—besides, he was always victorious; CÆSAR was sometimes defeated. In peace he was, perhaps, his superior; and the whole tenor of his conduct, even to the very moment of his death, when he left the succession to the *most worthy*, is a strong contrast to the turbulent character of that ambitious Dictator!—But surely nothing does ALEXANDER so much honor as that the vanquished DARIUS should employ the last moments of his life in supplicating the Gods to recompense his conqueror for the humanity, indulgence, and generosity he had shewn to those who were the dear-

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est to him upon earth. The unfinished bust of Brutus, by MICHAEL ANGELO, has occasioned some wit, and a more severe reflection on the Roman patriot than the sculptor probably, whose principles were Republican, ever intended. BRUTUS, at least, was instigated to what he did by the love of his country; the intention was noble, though the means were vile. His virtue in not occasioning more deaths than one, we cannot but approve, though MACCHIAVELLO would not commend its policy; he would have told him that the death of ANTHONY was not less necessary than that of CÆSAR to secure the liberties and quiet of the Republic.

In many of the Basso Relievos you see the manners and customs of the times; and it may be necessary to inform you that one of the most curious pieces of ancient sculpture, is a certain Pagan Deity, not commonly shewn; but, to judge by his extraordinary size, we may suppose that, when publicly viewed, he was generally worshipped.

The Tribune possesses the chief excellencies of Sculpture and Painting. The Venus of MEDICIS and Venus of TITIAN vie with each other; and were the other pictures equal to the other statues, this room would then be perfect. TheVenus (I wish she were taller) is of exquisite beauty. The author is unknown: it was not

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CLEOMENES. It is doubtful whether it be the Venus of Gnidos by PRAXITELES, though she is described in the same modest attitude; and employing both her hands, as bashfulness would direct. Let the author be who he may, the more you examine this statue, the more you will admire it. You see at once that she is high bred, and, were you not told she is a goddess, you could not mistake her for a common woman. The hands you may think *manieré*, but they are modern. The *Arrotino* has long puzzled the Conoscenti. The intention of the sculptor is not known, but by the beard he wears, it is generally understood that the person represented was of low condition.

Niobe and her Family have forsaken Rome to adorn the Gallery of Florence, where they are more sumptuously lodged, but less advantageously placed than in the Villa Medici. The room is very large, and very cold. This, it is true, is of little consequence to them who stood in a garden, exposed to the winter's blast for so many years, but to us who visit them is by no means a matter of indifference. It is finished also in a style better suited to a drawing-room than to a repository for statues; but to such a state of desperation are the arts reduced in this once famous country that, we not only cannot make a statue, but know not what to do with it

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when we have it. The Centaur, a beautiful statue by Giovanni Bologna, which had stood near two hundred years in a street that had taken its name, has been twice removed within my remembrance :—it is now shut up, because they literally do not know what to do with it, and I wish they may not be tempted at last to throw it into the river to avoid any further trouble.

It is not my intention to describe the Pictures of the Gallery. Were I to mention those which please me most, I should be puzzled where to begin and where to end. I was shocked at the Medusa of Leonardo da Vinci, probably that which Vasari mentions, and am always concerned when a painter of eminence employs his art on a horrid subject.

The Portraits of upwards of four hundred Painters, all painted by themselves, form a collection not to be met with, I believe, in any other country. Your friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds, is among the number. I wish the colouring of his own portrait may last longer than that of his other paintings. This excellent artist does not paint for posterity; and in a few years, were it not for the engraver, it might be a doubt if he ever existed. I am no painter; yet I cannot help wondering the art of colouring should

should be so much neglected, since not only the immediate effect depends upon it, but the future reputation of the painter himself.—The colouring of TITIAN, though three hundred years are already elapsed, is as beautiful as it was at first.

Statues and Pictures are not the only wonders of this superb Gallery. It possesses a treasure in gems, &c. that no Sovereign could afford to purchase. The little elegant Cammeo, which represents CUPID riding on a Lion, is of the greatest beauty. The idea is ingenious, and the execution admirable! To complete this cabinet was the labour of more than two centuries. The famous MEDICI Diamond was once its brightest ornament. They tell you it is at Vienna;—the Emperor best knows by what right.

The collection of Coins and Medals, and the Original Drawings by the old masters, are worth your seeing, but are not usually shewn.

Here are also Etruscan inscriptions to amuse and puzzle the antiquarian; and antique vases, of various forms, some for ornament, and some for use:—Guttæ, which held the oil to anoint their bodies when they came out of the bath; Pateræ, used in sacrifices; Lamps in abundance; and little glass bottles, called Lacrimatori, supposed,

posed to have received the tears they shed. Observe the votive offerings which the ancients hung up in their temples after a recovery.* They are of potters' earth, and made to represent the part affected. You see a great number of legs and arms; I observed a breast, from whence one may presume the lady had been cured of a cancer.

The Mosaic of Pietra dura, begun by Cosimo I., continued by Francesco, and perfected by Ferdinand, is formed of natural stones inlaid, and not of a composition like that of Rome: landscapes, sea views, birds, fruits, and flowers, are usually represented. It is a work of patience and expence. To finish a table like those of the Pitti Palace is the constant occupation of three years; the cost not less than twenty thousand crowns. The Mosaic at Rome answers a better purpose; it will faithfully render the paintings of the best masters to the latest posterity.

The Gallery is always open for the benefit of artists, except on holidays, and the inner apartments are shewn to visitors by a person appointed

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* The same custom is still observed at the Campo Santo at Pisa.

on purpose, and not permitted to receive any gratuity.

One circumstance I forgot. They tell you that this cabinet formerly contained an extraordinary Padlock, or Ceinture de Chasteté.—Let every married man on this occasion remember the words of PRIOR:

> Let all her ways be unconfin'd,
> And clap the padlock on her mind.

LETTER XVIII.

IT is astonishing with what rapidity a Museum is formed that has an intelligent person to direct it. Acquisitions are continually making, and the bulk daily increasing, when, like the miser's store, it suffers no diminution. In a few years, the Chevalier FONTANA, a man of talents, native of Roveredo, has formed a cabinet which, in many of its parts, has not its equal; and where the well-informed naturalist may find continual amusement: but the same reasons that prevented my entering into the detail of the beauties of the Gallery, must also deter me from describing the Gabinetto Fisico.

The anatomical preparations in wax are the best in Europe. They may tempt you, perhaps, to go through a course of anatomy, since you can do it without disgust; nor can any study be more interesting than that which so nearly concerns ourselves. The part, however, that

that relates to labour, it may not be the interest of mankind that women should see. The gentleman to whom the town of Florence is obliged for the arrangement and improvement of this Museum, and the learned world for many valuable discoveries, is engaged at present in a work of inestimable value—a Statue in wood that takes to pieces, shewing the whole body in all its parts, its muscles, its nerves, its veins, its arteries, and the whole intricacies of that frame which we are told is so fearfully and so wonderfully made. What a pleasant way of studying anatomy! In one respect this answers even better than the human body itself, where, to get at one muscle, you must first destroy another: here all take to pieces as they are wanted.

Among the many curiosities which this Museum contains, are the Horns of an unknown animal, resembling those of a bull, but considerably bigger; and the Teeth of a young elephant, found in the Val d'Arno, not far from Florence. This is, indeed, a curiosity... How these inhabitants of the torrid zone ever found their way into a country so different from their own, is a question, I believe, not easy to determine. They are found in great quantity, and of all ages: the few that HANNIBAL brought along with him into Italy, all died except one, by the severity of the cold at the battle of Trebbia.

bia. The bones of this animal, as well as those of the rhinoceros, are also found in Siberia, where it is pretty certain neither of them could at present exist. You see basalt, pumice stones, and lava, produce of volcanoes, found in Tuscany, where not a single volcano is now remaining; which has led some to conclude that the world is older than it is thought; nor, as they say, will the term of six thousand years in anywise account for the various strata of lava found one under another in the neighbourhood of Ætna and Vesuvius. VOLTAIRE says—"*Que le monde est une vieille Putain qui cache bien son age.*"

Examine the Amiantus, a mineral substance, of woolly texture, endued with the wonderful property of resisting fire; from which the ancients made a kind of cloth, to preserve the ashes of the bodies that they burnt. It is found in several parts of Italy. Of petrified wood here are various specimens of the greatest beauty; and fossils with the impression of fish, from Monte Bolca, near Verona: some of which are unknown in these seas, and found in that of Otaheite. The Cornu Ammonis has this particularity, that, though the petrifaction is frequently found, the shell itself is unknown. The Camelion, a kind of lizard, changes colour according to the objects presented to it; lives

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on flies, but has been kept alive many months without any kind of food.

Among the Insects is a Scarabeo Imperiale, a brilliant little animal, that appears covered with diamonds of different colours; and the Curculio Bebula, lately found out to be efficacious in curing the tooth-ach. In short, insects, shells, and minerals, are the most complete parts of the collection, and mostly deserve your attention. Acquainted as you are with Lever's Museum, you need not lose much time in looking at the animals. Here is no Giraffa, to make amends for other deficiencies; nor even one Gumarre, an animal supposed to be generated by horses with cows, or by bulls with mares, and announced by BARETTI as common in Piedmont; but, as far as I can find, is as little known there, as in this or any other country.

The Egyptian Mummy, which they tell us is at least three thousand years old, is not a bit bigger than ourselves: from whence we might conclude that mankind are not so much degenerated as some people think, and as HOMER and VIRGIL would make us believe. The Egyptians are said to have painted their mummies to resemble as much as possible the person when alive:—either this was a bad painter, or the woman one of the ugliest I ever beheld. A representation of the Plague in wax, done in the time

time of the MEDICI, is said to be admirably executed; you will conclude therefore that it cannot be looked at with pleasure.

I know not who was the first discoverer of the fact that, in some of the insect tribes, animation is capable of being suspended and renewed almost *ad infinitum*. The Rotifer is well known to die and revive alternately in the gutters of our houses, during the summer months, by being supplied with, or deprived of, a drop of moisture. But the Chevalier FONTANA has discovered a much more curious instance of this property. He has found that some damaged wheat, taken from a granary in which it had remained upwards of forty years, is composed of millions of eels, which, being moistened with water, immediately revive, and move with agility; but can only be seen by the help of a microscope.

In the Gabinetto Fisico you will find a continual source of entertainment;—but, since something must ever be wanting, and whatever has to do with brick and mortar in this country must infallibly be mean and trifling, neither the elegance nor convenience of the building in any-wise correspond with the treasure it contains. The rooms are all little and low; and so cold, that even an inhabitant of the north, cannot visit them without complaining. A private collection, belonging to a countryman of ours,

is also well furnished, and well arranged.—Though these Cabinets have afforded me infinite pleasure, a moment's reflection tells me that treasures of this kind are not to be envied, since the stranger who is at no trouble or expence, enjoys them more than the possessor. How true what SHAKESPEARE says: "*Happy thou art not, for what thou hast not still thou strivest to get, and what thou hast forgettest.*" How applicable to every situation in life, and particularly to gentlemen of *virtu* who are ever more sensibly mortified by that which they cannot obtain, than they receive pleasure from that which they possess.

Of the Observatory, which is part of this building, I have nothing to observe, unless it be that in all the town of Florence it might be difficult to find another situation so ill suited to the purpose.

If the force of attraction in all bodies were in exact proportion to the quantity of matter they contain, a Lady of my acquaintance, La Signora ——, would be irresistable. She was as beautiful, as large. You shall now hear what has just happened to her. This unfortunate lady has met with a monster in the form of a Cavalier Servente, who, abusing the privilege of attending her to the theatre, has disfigured her on her return home to such a degree as to render this beau-

beautiful woman an object of disgust and horror. I have just been to see her :—her nose is almost cut off, it hangs as it were by a single thread,—her upper lip is severed in two, and has left a frightful chasm, through which her teeth and gums appear. The quantity of blood she has lost, the pain she has suffered, the anxiety she feels, render her one of the most interesting objects I ever beheld, and the most disgusting. Jealousy is thought to have occasioned it.

You will be surprised to hear that this ruffian is of one of the best families at Naples. You will be sorry to hear that he has escaped. If assassination could ever be justified, it would be in a case like this. I could readily forgive the husband or the brother of this injured lady, were he to send another villain after him, cruel and unprincipled as himself, to treat him in the same manner. He is beneath the resentment of a man of honor.

LETTER XIX.

ITALY in general is well provided with public Libraries, and much learning is shut up there that all might have access to if they pleased. The town of Florence has not less than three.

The Laurenziana Library begun by COSIMO Pater Patriæ, and afterwards continued by LORENZO il Magnifico his grandson, is confined to Manuscripts only, and said to contain upwards of ten thousand. They were procured in great part from Constantinople, by means of the extensive commerce the MEDICI family at that time carried on in the Levant; were afterwards increased by LEO X. and CLEMENT VII., and completed by COSIMO I. in 1571. The plan of the building by MICHAEL ANGELO has this particularity: the books are chained to reading desks on each side the room. The door is much admired, but you will be shocked to see a vestibule and stair-case by the great MICHAEL ANGELO, unfinished, and

and the materials still on the spot, as they were left in the time of the MEDICI. MICHAEL ANGELO has still more reason to complain of the barbarity of the age than LUCA PITTI.*

The famous Virgil, rival of that of the Vatican, was procured at Rome by COSIMO I. of Cardinal INNOCENZIO dei Monti, whose property it was. This alone may be considered as a literary treasure. For its antiquity you have the authority of T. RUFIUS, who was Consul of Rome in the year 494 :—" *Turvies Rufius Apronianus Asterius Legi, et distinxi Codicem.*" This testimony proves its existence then, but we do not know how long it may have existed before that time. The Eneid in this manuscript does not begin with "*Ille ego qui quon-dam, &c.*" They are indifferent lines, and it is generally believed that VIRGIL never wrote them. I confess I should have thought otherwise had I seen them *here*. The Eneid was left unfinished, and condemned by its author to the flames, as unfit for the public eye. To the vanity of AUGUSTUS we owe its preservation. That Emperor who would not consent that it should be destroyed, gave it to TUSCA and VARUS, men of distinguished abilities, to revise and publish. They had the liberty

* See Letter XIV.

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to retrench, but not to add; and the many unfinished verses that still remain are incontestible proofs that the confidence was not ill placed. I will only ask if it is not more probable that VIRGIL, in an unfavourable moment, should have written those lines, than that two men of acknowledged talents, in an age so renowned for taste and elegance, should have been silly enough to spoil, by an addition of their own, directly contrary to the express order of the Emperor, an introduction which has been the admiration and envy of every succeeding Poet. It is said that OCTAVIA, sister to AUGUSTUS, gave VIRGIL three thousand crowns for three lines. It was a high price, yet not more than they deserved, since we know of no other merit MARCELLUS had.

They shew you a Bible in the time of San GREGORIO (about one hundred years after), and you may perceive an evident difference in the characters.—This is said to be the oldest Bible in Europe. In PETRARCH's Virgil is his Portrait, and that of LAURA. The Tacitus is the father of all the Tacitus's now extant, and the manuscript of the Florentine History by MACCHIAVEL, in his own hand writing, deserves your attention. The Pandects, a collection of Roman Laws by JUSTINIAN, brought by the

Pisans

Pisans from Amalfi, and from Pisa to Florence in great triumph when that city was subdued by the Florentines, is worth your inquiry; as are the Travels of Cosimo III. You will there see many views of English villas, and may read a curious journal of that Prince's travels. At Wilton, the writer tells us two ladies sung him an English air, *assai male* (very ill); and seems to doubt whether to lay the greatest blame on the singers or the music. His account of the manners of the English Court is not more favourable; and, though he allows that the nobility, and particularly those who had travelled, were more civilized than the populace, yet he denies that they arrive at the *disinvoltura* of the Italians (it is an Italian who speaks), and describes them as preserving their natural melancholy on every occasion, their mind constantly occupied by some unpleasant reflection. This Prince was well received by Charles II. and staid three months at his Court, yet his country received but little advantage from his travels; he returned proud, vain, and full of prejudices. Little better could be expected from a man educated by Friars, who from his youth was averse to pleasure, and is even represented as a declared enemy to poetry and music. Avaricious, cruel, and despotical, he was a bigot without virtue; and

and as he had spent the greater part of his time among Priests, by them only was he regretted.*

The Marucelliana Library is open every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and contains many useful books and some valuable editions, particularly one of DANTE of the year 1481, with cuts by MASO FINIGUERRA, a Florentine, said to have been the first engraver and inventor of that art. Is it not strange that an art so simple, and at the same time so useful, should have remained so long unknown. Few of the editions of Dante have more than two cuts—this has nineteen.

Another valuable curiosity is the finger of GALILEO, a philosophical relic. The very finger that first pointed out the Satellites of JUPITER. He called them *Stelle Medicee*, in compliment to the Grand Duke COSIMO II., but if that family had not immortalized themselves by the encouragement they gave to arts and letters, this attempt, though well meant, had not succeeded, for the Satellites of Jupiter have already lost the name he gave them. A gentleman, I shall not say of what nation, I am glad he was

* This Holy man, after various persecutions, confined the Chevalier ACCIAIOLI in a dungeon for life, for no other crime than that of marrying the Signora MORMORAI without his approbation.

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not an Englishman, asked the librarian if GALILEO was not a Roman Emperor!—I never saw a man so shocked in my life, and I believe he was heartily glad when he got rid of us.

The Magliabechi Library takes its name from the founder ANTONIO MAGLIABECHI, a man of an extraordinary memory. In this library are some curious manuscripts, and many beautiful and rare editions. Compare BODONI with BASKERVILLE; divest yourself of prejudice, and give the Italian all the praise he deserves. Here also is a DANTE of the year 1481; and a curious Pandect of Roman Laws of the year 1525, adorned with miniatures that are an honor to that time. The original Pandect from which all the others are derived, I have already mentioned among the Laurenziana manuscripts.

The Accademia Florentina, formerly *La Crusca*, founded by the Grand Duke FERDINAND, is held here every Thursday. This Academy once rendered itself famous by its Criticisms on the Jerusalem of TASSO, encouraged to it by the Grand Duke FRANCESCO, the family of MEDICI, and the Florentines in general, having been severely handled by that author in one of his Dialogues. He calls the Florentines *artists*, and the Government, "*Giogo della nuova Tirannide della Casa Medici.*" In return, they gave the preference to ARIOSTO, and placed TASSO second

second only; a judgment to which the world, I believe, has not generally subscribed.

L'Accademia del Cimento which began in 1657 for experimental Philosophy, under the auspices of Prince LEOPOLD, son of COSIMO II. set the example to Paris and London. LOUIS XIV. and CHARLES II. founded their Royal Academies in imitation of it.

The ancient Academy del Disegno, founded in 1350, was the first academy of the kind in Europe. It was re-established by the present Sovereign in 1784. The students are provided with casts of the best statues, and supplied with paper, pencils, brushes, canvas, and colours, at the expence of the Sovereign. Prize medals are also distributed to the most deserving. Thus far great praise is due: but if you inquire into the capacity of the masters, you will find some of them deficient in the common principles of drawing, and yet one month in the year the whole academy is under their direction.—Are such persons proper to direct where once MICHAEL ANGELO presided! and in a country once superior in science even to Rome itself!—A short residence in Tuscany will, however, convince you, that were the means better adapted to the intention, it would be to little purpose while taste is wanting, and merit is not encouraged. I have just bought General ELLIOT

on horseback, by one of their best engravers. The horse is a perfect monster, and the General not much better: I mean to hang it up by one of BARTOLOZZI's, who is also a Florentine, to shew their countrymen that talents seldom come to perfection except where they meet with encouragement. What I have said of the masters, leaves me nothing to say of the performances of the scholars, in which there is little to commend.

In this Academy you see a curious statue of GERMANICUS. He is said to have invented the game of *Mora*, the present amusement of the lowest class of people in Italy, in order to keep his soldiers employed. This statue is supposed to represent him playing at it. The original is at Versailles.

The Accademia dei Georgofili was instituted for the encouragement of agriculture, and premiums are given every year. This institution would be useful if the premiums were properly bestowed. During the time I have been here, I have known them given first for cutting down trees, and shortly afterwards for planting them.

Having thus given some, though an imperfect account of the libraries of Florence, you will probably expect something should now be said of the state of Literature. On this subject I have little to say. There is no science for gentlemen

tlemen in this country but poetry, and few are born poets. Where there is no copy-right, there will be many publishers, and few authors. Any one may print who pleases. An ingenious friend of mine, whose Fables have already gone through many editions, has himself received the advantage of one only. The talents of Italy are at present chiefly employed in translations, and though no genius is necessary, more knowledge is required than these gentlemen usually possess —an intimate acquaintance with both languages. Some there are who make a merit of using the same number of words: it would be more to the purpose were they to give the precise meaning of the author.

Though authors refrain from publishing for more than one reason; though regular-bred poets are no longer to be found, improvisatori, or quacks in poetry, are frequently to be met with, not only in Tuscany, but in every part of Italy. Improvisatorying is a talent peculiar to the Italians. Neither the author of Paradise Lost, nor of the Henriade, nor any of their successors, were improvisatori: from whence I conclude it to depend more on the language of the country, than on the poetic genius of the people. I have no doubt that it is full of imposture—excuse and compliment form a considerable part of it, which are ready prepared,

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and suit all subjects, and all occasions. Verses that please over night, would hardly escape the fire in the morning. The Chevalier PERFETTI, the most celebrated improvisatore of his time, esteemed all over Italy, and even crowned in the Campidoglio, might have retained his reputation had he not published his poetry. It is a charming talent in its proper place; but let it be confined to the table where all are inclined to merriment, and where, if you are enchanted, you are seldom disposed critically to examine whether you ought to be enchanted or not.

Arts, sciences, and letters, are nearly on a level, and from the same cause. It is not genius that is wanting, but encouragement. The MEDICI family not only encouraged science, and protected men of learning, but received them with kindness and familiarity. They were well aware that the reputation of Princes is in their hands;—that it is as easy to speak ill as well of them, without deviating from the truth; and that some virtues may be found in all. AUGUSTUS, a dastardly cut-throat, did some good actions: and our own RICHARD has found his panegyrist. The policy of former times is now reversed: science is annihilated; and the day not far off when talents will be sought for in Tuscany, and not be found.—The principal offices of the State must then be entrusted either to the hands

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of foreigners, who are always looked upon with an evil eye; or be left to the guidance of those who, like unskilful pilots, will accelerate the ruin they were intended to prevent!

LETTER XX.

IT may be a matter of doubt, whether Hospitals, though in appearance and intention so perfectly humane, are, in their consequences, an advantage to the community, for whose benefit they were established. I fancy those countries where they are unknown, are not less healthy; perhaps, not less populous.—But, as it is not my design to enter into a question of such importance, I shall proceed in my description of the Hospitals of Florence.

The Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova is a handsome building, clean, airy, and wholesome; but is half ruined by an unlucky speculation, that of disposing of their patrimony: they are now obliged to buy every thing. CATO says—"*Pater familias vendacem, non emacem esse oportet.*" The regulations, in many instances, deserve commendation. The sick are separated from the wounded; the convalescents, from the sick;

sick; the men, from the women; and each has a bed to himself. It was otherwise at Paris. A friend of mine, a man of veracity, has assured me, that he once saw there, what you will with difficulty believe, three men in one bed—one ill, one dying, and one dead.—How horrid! It is worse than the cruelty of MEZENTIUS!

The Kitchen is curious. The same fire not only roasts and boils, but, by means of iron-partitions, occasionally introduced, the several stew-pans that are constantly in use, are heated or cooled, without being moved from their places. The same fire heats water also for the baths, serves as a ventilator, and answers every other purpose of the hospital.

It is said, that the ability of the Professors is in no wise equal to the magnificence of the building: that operations are awkwardly performed, and patients die under their hands that might have been saved. MIGLIORE informs us, that from the foundation of this hospital, in the year 1287 to 1680, the year in which he wrote, it appeared on the books that three hundred and sixty thousand bodies had been buried there in the space of three hundred and ninety-two years. It is but lately that they have given mercury in the venereal disease. For many years they used no other remedy than salsa parilla, and guiacum. I leave you to judge how many they cured. Is

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it not extraordinary that mercury, that wonderful specific, the only one existing for that fatal disorder, should have been known, tried, and its good effects acknowledged, in the time of PAOLO GIOVIO,* yet disused and discredited afterwards for more than a century, even till the time of ALESSANDRO DA CARPI. It is said that this disorder, when acquired in a warm, is not easily got rid of in a cold climate.

It is computed that they lose two thirds of those whom they cut for the stone. Considered as a school of anatomy, the institution is excellent. About thirty patients die every month; a room is appropriated to receive the dead bodies, and the surgeon who attended me, not finding any there, said it was the first time he ever knew it fail. From thence they are removed to the dissecting room as they are wanted.—Had our surgeons the same advantage, the dead might be suffered to remain quiet in their graves:—physicians might learn to cure by those they kill; and he who had grossly and fatally mistaken the disease, improve by his own errors.

A curious experiment has been tried here to cure the bite of a mad dog, by the bite of a

* In the year 1494, soon after it first broke out in Italy.

viper. You know that one is thought to be fatal by dissolving the blood; the other, by coagulating it. The experiment I think more witty, than judicious; for, allowing the theory to be just, I cannot conceive the possibility of hitting the exact proportion: if too little of the venom of the viper, the patient would die of the bite of the mad dog; if too much, of that of the viper.

I saw in this hospital a shocking object; a man with a tumour in his arm that was swelled as big as his body: no chance of suppuration—amputation impossible: no rest, night nor day: a probability of living some months—and the certainty of a painful death! A thought of such an unfortunate being might render us easy under those trifles which, for want of greater evils, we call sufferings. It has since occurred to me in riding by, that if an accident was then to happen, I should prefer the hospital to my own house:—that, surrounded by miseries greater than my own, and perhaps less merited, I should receive more comfort than from the sight of pleasures I could not enjoy, and yet might envy. Not that I should choose to be carried thither, like the man I met yesterday, on a bier, covered with black; supported and attended by a parcel of dismal figures in long black gowns and black masks, looking more like devils than men: if

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the poor fellow had weak nerves, he might fancy himself already both dead and damned. Count ———, just arrived at Florence, meeting with an accident at Fiesole, the Misericordia were sent for to carry him home; but when he saw the apparatus, and the dismal appearance it made, he fancied they thought him dead, and intended to bury him. It was to no purpose he was assured to the contrary, and told how handy they are in their operations; he still persisted that not one of them should touch him; he put himself in a posture of defence; and they were obliged to return as they came.

My friend STERNE took for the text of one of his Sermons—"It is better to enter the house of mourning, than the house of feasting;" and then, after his own whimsical manner, adds—"*That I deny.*" The subject is ingeniously treated, and, to a reflecting mind, both may be useful. It is natural to fly from objects of horror; yet a visit now and then to these mansions of melancholy and distress, while it prompts us to acts of charity and benevolence, may at the same time teach us not to set a greater value on life than it deserves.

Before I quit the subject I must tell you, that a few years ago, the Governor (a great bigot) ordered, that all the invalids should keep Lent, except such as could produce a dispensation

under the hand of their physician. One might have thought the very circumstance of being in the hospital a sufficient proof that they were sick, without any other.

A separate hospital for the insane and cutaneous disorders is also worth your seeing.

The Misericordia was first instituted at the time of the plague; a calamity to which Florence has been subject not less, I think, than twenty-one times. The most fatal was that in the time of Boccaccio, when one hundred thousand people died of it, the greatest part in Florence. In the convent of the Monache di San Martino, is a marble inscription against the wall on the inside, near Via Polverosa, announcing that twenty thousand bodies lie buried there who died of the plague in 1479. During the plague in 1630, the Misericordia were particularly useful; and left in writing the method they then observed. It is an excellent institution, and cannot be passed over in silence.

The number of brothers is not limited, and any person may be admitted that pleases. They are divided into three classes. The first are called Capi di Guardia, and are those who have been longest in the service: they are no longer obliged to accompany the sick; but when present, order and direct the rest.

The second are the Giornanti; each of these has

has one day in the week fixed for his attendance, and on the other days is at liberty to attend or not, as he thinks fit.

The third are the Volunteers: these are always at liberty; but, if they do not sometimes attend, are struck off the list.

Regulated in this manner, a sufficient number of Brothers are present at every summons. If the Volunteers fail, those of the Giornanti, whose turn it is, are themselves sufficient to answer every purpose. The Capi di Guardia being numerous, one is always ready to take the command: he goes before: he is the first to enter the house of the sick person, and, according to the circumstances, gives his orders; the others upon this occasion, as well as upon the march, observing the most profound silence. The key of the bandages, restoratives, &c. &c., which they carry along with them, is also in his keeping.

This Charity has three objects. They carry the poor that are sick to the hospital, and, in all casualties, the wounded or disabled person, if alive; but if dead, to their own Chapel, where he lays exposed as he was found, and every one is admitted to see him. The servant of the Misericordia is first made acquainted when an accident happens. It is his business to repair imme-

immediately to the place, inquire into the fact, and return to ring the bell, which is the summons for the Brothers to assemble. When the bell is rung twice, it is a sign the person is still alive: three times is a confirmation of death; in which case the body cannot be removed till it has been first examined by the Police.

The same servant is also applied to when any person is in want of their assistance to be carried to the hospital; and they not only never refuse their attendance, but also make a collection among themselves for the support of the wife or children that remain. There is besides a box in their Chapel for public charity, which, at the end of every month, is distributed among the families of those they have carried to the hospital.

Long practice has made them particularly handy, and, though not obliged, they readily attend upon the sick of all ranks when sent for. They can accept no gratuity; not even victuals or drink, nor have they any salary;—a funeral service, and a mass said for their souls, after they are dead, is their only recompence.

The Innocenti, a Foundling Hospital, was built by Brunelleschi. The children *fasciati* as an outside ornament, is a composition invented by Luca della Robbia, and called so after

after him. The art is lost, nor is it to be regretted.* In the time of BENEDETTO VARCHI eleven thousand crowns were spent annually on this charity, and not less than a thousand children received. In the time of MIGLIORE, the number was increased to four thousand. The boys were retained, as now, till the age of eighteen, and the girls till they were married. The number received at present is little more than a thousand. The income about fifty thousand crowns. New-born infants only are received; and those through a hole in the wall, just large enough for the head to pass. It is computed, from the time they are received till the age of ten years, they lose eighty in a hundred, that is, four-fifths. I believe it more readily, as a servant of mine put four there, and they are all dead in less than as many years. Without doubt, there is a great fault somewhere, which the humanity, as well as the good policy of the Government, should endeavour to find out and remedy. This, I am told, was the first institution of the kind, and Florence was excommunicated for it by the Pope. Ridiculous as it may

* LUCA DELLA ROBBIA, a Florentine, born in 1388, invented the composition called after his name. A kind of Terra Cotta, painted and varnished.

appear,

appear, I cannot think the Pope so much to blame, unless better care were taken of them afterwards.

At the Bigallo, or Abbandonati, poor boys and girls who are fatherless, are also received, and kept till the age of eighteen. They are taught different trades; and the girls at eighteen years old may claim a dower of thirty crowns. The income is about twelve thousand crowns. These excellent establishments were in the time of the Republic.

You should see the Scuola Regia, a day-school for poor girls: there are four of them, one in each quarter of the town. The girls come in the morning and evening, and return home to dine and sleep. They are paid half what they earn. They are taught besides to write and read, and are instructed in their religion. They are, by turns, made to do the work of the house; clean the rooms, furniture, &c. Formerly they used to dress the dinner; but I suppose they were bad cooks, as this business is taken out of their hands. Five dowers, of twenty crowns each, are given every year; and the girls, at eighteen years old, have a right to claim them. This is an excellent institution, and does honor to the Sovereign.

One anecdote of the last Duke of Tuscany, of the MEDICI family, and I have done with the

town

town of Florence. A gentleman, wishing to add a Terrace to his house in Borgo Ogni Santi, presented a petition to GIO. GASTONE for his permission, who, not approving, and being a humorist, wrote at the back—"*Si concede all' Rovescio;*" meaning that he would not grant it. The petitioner thought fit to understand him literally, and built his terrace, setting every part upside down. This house is admirably situated for the race of San GIOVANNI.

LETTER XXI.

For forms of Government let Fools contest,
That which is best administered is best.

POPE.

ARE all forms of Government then alike, and is no distinction to be made between a Divan and a Senate? I am astonished that an Englishman, born under the most perfect of all possible governments, a limited Monarchy; where the executive power is in the hands of one person, and he only restrained from doing ill. The legislative in King, Lords, and Commons, in Parliament assembled; where the rights of the people are maintained by representatives of their own choosing, but where in their own persons they have rather an ideal power than real influence. The happiest medium between despotism and anarchy. I am astonished that the Author of the Essay on Man should have been

so little sensible of these blessings as to advance a doctrine so pernicious, and so new. I confess that I am one of those fools who fancy there is nothing so essential to the happiness of mankind as the nature of the Government under which they live :—it influences their thoughts and actions—raises or depresses them—makes them heroes, or makes them slaves. Visit the Swiss Cantons, compare the cheerfulness of that country of liberty with the gloom of Tuscany.—The cultivated mountains of the Vallais with the desolate Campagna of Rome.—Modern Greece with ancient Sparta; and then tell me if the forms of Government are a matter of indifference.

The second line I do not very well understand. If the Author by "*best administered*," means administered in a manner most conformable to its own principles; in that case I apprehend the better a bad government is administered, the worse it of course will be. With such sentiments you will not expect me to be totally silent on the Government of Florence. I shall say but little, that little will be superficial, and I shall dwell with less pleasure on the subject, as the good effects do not always correspond with the good intentions of the Sovereign.

The Grand Duke of Tuscany has both the legislative and executive power in his own hands:

—of

—of all systems the most adverse to liberty. He changes his laws as often as he changes his mind, and you will be able to judge by this short Letter, how far the sentence of every Court of Justice is under his particular influence. It is true he has a Consiglio di Stato for foreign affairs that meet once a week, but they meet only in his presence, and under his direction.

The Magistrato Supremo is a Court of Justice for civil causes, composed of five Senators and three auditors. The Senators meet only twice in the week, the Auditors every day, and, in fact, do all the business. The five Senators, part of a body of forty-eight, are changed every four months. They are representatives in name and dress only of what was once the Senate. This Court decides all causes in Prima istanza, the appeal is to the Ruota composed of six Auditors, three of whom form a Court, and preside alternately. The second appeal is to those who were not present at the first, and this last trial is decisive. Though even then the Sovereign, if he pleases, may refer their sentence to the *Consulta*, a tribunal under his own immediate direction.

Criminal causes are first examined by the Assessor, who passes sentence as the law directs. The case, with all its circumstances, is then sent to the Auditor, who has the power to confirm or mitigate: it then goes to the President, whose

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approbation is necessary to confirm the sentence. If the two first differ, the President decides; if they agree in an opinion different from his own, he makes the alteration he thinks proper, and returns the sentence for their approbation: if they still persist, which seldom happens, the case is referred to the *Consulta*, whose decision is final.

The Commissario is a Magistrate under the direction of the Presidente del buon Governo, who is himself directed by the Sovereign. He tries all criminal causes of little consequence, and all civil causes under one hundred livres. The town is divided into four quarters, and has a Commissary in each. This Magistrate has great power, and may send for and question whomsoever he pleases. Gentlemen of the highest rank, and in the highest offices, must obey his summons. The morals of the people are under his inspection; and he still maintains an arbitrary power, notwithstanding the new Code of Laws so justly celebrated.—Laws that I have read with pleasure; that do honor to the Sovereign; that disclaim every act of tyranny and oppression: yet the Processi Camerali are still carried on—a jurisdiction more arbitrary, and less limited, than that of the Inquisition itself.

The Communitá of Florence is a Magistracy, consisting of four nobles, four citizens, and four inha-

inhabitants. These twelve have the title of Priori; the President has also that of Gonfaloniere. They hold their offices for one year only. They are chosen by ballot—a bad custom, since many are fit to elect, who are not fit to be elected. Their names are drawn out of their respective classes like tickets in the lottery; by which means, out of about twenty thousand persons who are eligible to this office, the government of the town, as far as relates to its internal taxation, may fall by chance into the hands of twelve persons who have not common sense. This Chamber has a superintendance over all the buildings of the City, all the public festivals, and directs all the impositions that are laid on the inhabitants for bridges, paving the streets, &c. &c.; they raise the money, and the Sovereign, when he pleases, directs them how to employ it.

I have heard of a circumstance that once attended this institution, which, for its singularity, merits to be recorded. In every question the lesser number of votes prevailed over the greater, that is, one third carried it against the other two. The Legislator puts me in mind of the Doctor of Roveredo, who perceiving that every consumptive person constantly died under the regular treatment, by way of experiment, tried the reverse:—instead of milk and vegetables,

tables, ordered them brandy and salt meat; instead of gentle exercise, the most violent that could be taken; and instead of preventing perspiration, took every method to promote it.

Many are the inferior Courts.—But these are the principal features of the Government of Florence, by which it may not be difficult to form an idea of the rest. *Divide, et impera*, is the maxim of the Court; and you will perceive, that when two persons are employed in the same office, one is usually chosen with sentiments diametrically opposite to the other. The Vicar of Pistoia is in direct opposition to the Bishop ———: a manœuvre pretty general in every department of the State.

Peter Leopold is his own Prime Minister. Others are appointed to figure in the scene, but are thought to be as thoroughly dependent, as the puppets of the theatre—a system more presumptuous than politic. A Prime Minister is an excellent butt for the exercise of discontent, and the best buckler a Sovereign can oppose to the shafts of malice.—A King of England can do no wrong, because the laws have wisely made others answerable: when general discontent prevails, the removal of a Minister restores tranquillity, and the King still retains the affections of his people. It is otherwise in Tuscany. Here every act is traced directly to its source. The

Sove-

Sovereign himself is pointed out as the sole adviser, and perpetrator, of every change that caprice suggests, or despotism imposes! LOUIS XV. always gave up his own opinion to that of his Ministers; and when things went wrong, which frequently happened, he would say—"You see, gentlemen, I was right; *you had better have followed my advice.*"

A book has lately been published by the Grand Duke, to justify his Administration. His friends wish he had remained silent. There are bold assertions, at which the Florentines shake their heads; and many excellent maxims, which make them regret that they were not more strictly observed. The calumniator under TRAJAN was to suffer the same punishment, if he did *not* make good his charge, to which the accused was liable, if he *did*. In the above book is the same sentiment—but I cannot say I have ever heard of its being put in practice.

I lately read in an English newspaper, that the Grand Duke of Tuscany is distinguished by his simplification of the laws: his remission of oppressive taxes; his government being that of a Philosophic Prince, who wishes to secure the affections of his people. As I neither wish to censure nor flatter, I shall answer his panegyrist as shortly as possible. Every day produces a new law: nor can I compliment a Sovereign on the

the simplification of laws that have increased so astonishingly during a reign of twenty-five years. The laws of ancient Rome were comprised in twelve tables. The laws of Denmark are contained in one moderate quarto volume, published more than one hundred years ago, and are the only laws observed at present in that country. In Tuscany we have not an ancient law remaining; some of which, as a foreigner, I must conclude were good, because they are regretted; and many that have replaced them, I must conclude bad, because they are not observed. So far his Royal Highness seems to copy JUSTINIAN, of whom it is said, that he every day abolished an old law, or made a new one.

Many taxes, it is true, the Grand Duke has repealed to his own prejudice. I am told, in the article of snuff alone, he loses eighty thousand crowns a year, without rendering an essential service to his subjects. Taxes that we have been long accustomed to, we are prepared to meet, and are as little sensible of their oppression, as we are of that of the atmospheric air with which we are surrounded. The intention of this Prince was, without doubt, favorable to his people; I wish, therefore, he had kept the money, and employed it more to their benefit. With such a sum he might have encouraged

merit, relieved misery, and made many an honest and deserving family happy.

If Philosophy is shewn by removing prejudices, without considering consequences, then PETER LEOPOLD may justly merit the title of Philosopher. But is it not to *Philosophy*, such as that of this Sovereign and his Brother, to which we chiefly owe that disregard to Religion —that absurd system of equality—those principles of infidelity and Jacobinism, which of late have so much prevailed?—in short, all the political mischiefs that have since happened, and by which we are now surrounded. With regard to his own country, had the Grand Duke been a better politician, he would, rather than have deprived his subjects of one Madonna, have given them ten, and respected the prejudices of a religion from which his government receives its best support, and his people their greatest comfort: instead of which, he has, by his present conduct, shaken the faith of some; called forth the resistance of others; and hurt the feelings of all.

As I hitherto have not flattered the Grand Duke of Tuscany, you will not suspect my sincerity if, on quitting the subject, I should add, that his manners are amiable; his conversation easy, lively, and familiar; that in talents he is supe-

superior to most Sovereigns; in assiduity, to all; and those who are least contented under his government, cannot but allow that Tuscany had been too happy if the result of this Prince's labours had always kept pace with the goodness of his intentions. In one point, I fear we shall differ. I know you approve the Sovereign who is his own Prime Minister. Convinced that there are but few FREDERICKS, I prefer that intuition which enables him to understand characters, and adapt persons to their employments. *Non omnia possumus omnes.* Princes, it is true, surrounded by flatterers, and treated like Divinities, do not without reason fancy themselves infallible: but it would be better both for themselves and others, if, once in a year at least, like the Lords of ancient Rome, they would condescend to hear truth, suffer their slaves to tell them of their weaknesses, and remind them that they are men.—In your own family, which is government on a smaller scale, you may easily, if you please, put presumption to the proof.—Instruct your house-keeper to pickle and preserve; your butler to make your beer; your cook to make your soup; and then, half poisoned, get on the coach-box, square your elbows, smack your whip, and overturn the coach.

LETTER XXII.

" Rara temporum felicitate, ubi sentire quæ velis, et quæ sentias dicere licet."

SUCH is the favorable portrait PLINY gives us of the reign of TRAJAN, whose amiable conduct in this particular, forms a strong contrast with that of many of his predecessors, by whom spies, informers, and calumniators were encouraged and rewarded. I am concerned that some of our modern Potentates, virtuous in other respects, and worthy of esteem, strangers to the vices as well as the cruelties of those times, should have followed the example of the NEROS and CALIGULAS of antiquity, rather than that of TRAJAN and the ANTONINES.

You who approve of spies, as far as the safety of Government is concerned, and in seditious times they certainly are of use, will agree with me that they should neither be employed without

out caution, nor credited without proof. Their information is always doubtful, for they give up all pretension to character and honor when they accept so infamous an employment. In the town of Florence there is neither house nor coffee-house that has not one or more of these honorable persons belonging to it. Every class furnishes them; gentlemen and ladies receive, without shame, the wages of iniquity. The very Convents are not without their share of the infamy. The streets swarm with those of inferior note—they are posted at every corner; even the cripple who asks your charity is hired to betray your secrets. We read that the Persian Monarch had a set of Ministers who were called the eyes of the King, and whose business it was to report to him whatever they saw in his dominions; and others who were called the ears of the King, because they informed him of all they heard. PETER LEOPOLD has improved on this, and the same person is made to answer both purposes.

The friends of this system tell us that it saves the expence of an army; but they do not consider that it corrupts the morals of the people, causes disquiet and distrust in every family, and destroys all manner of confidence between man and man. It is most pernicious under a despotic government. In England the consequences are less

less to be dreaded: in that country of freedom no man is detained in prison; if accused, he is tried, publicly tried: sees his accuser, hears the accusation, and is only punished when found guilty by his Peers. In either country it is not without its remedy. Let us imitate the ancient Philosopher who wished he had a glass on his breast that men might see his thoughts as well as his actions: let us neither say nor do any thing to offend the laws of the country which affords us protection, and we shall then have less reason to disapprove the severity of a police which increases our security.

Thieving, a common consequence of extreme misery, bad education, and disrespect of the laws, is at present unusual in Tuscany.

Riots and disturbances are also extraordinary events, and seldom happen. If you ask me by what means the people are kept in subjection I shall be puzzled how to answer you.

When I first knew Florence, soon after the accession of PETER LEOPOLD to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, I found an army. At my return in the year 1785, that army had been disbanded, and a militia, consisting of four hundred men, were upon duty in its stead. During my stay in Florence I saw regular troops again established, and though only four hundred, to save the pitiful sum of as many Pauls a day,

day, they were disbanded a second time.* I have an utter aversion to mistaken economy, nor can I consider *that* money as lost to the State which circulates so freely. It is easier to prevent evils than remedy them. Four hundred soldiers in Florence answered all the purposes of an army,—that of keeping the people quiet: as many thousands would be insufficient to resist them were they in open rebellion. A gentleman very sillily asked me, when conversing together on this subject, if I thought eighty thousand people were to be kept in awe by four hundred?—Certainly not, were the eighty thousand all of one mind. But riots arise from small beginnings. A mob is usually composed of unarmed people, men, women, and children, which ten soldiers, if opposed in time, might easily disperse.

Without the gift of prophecy, it was easy to fortel what was to happen. In a town like Florence, where public fêtes are frequently given, and where order is to be preserved by restraint only, a military force is always necessary. The very appearance of a soldier is sufficient in a country accustomed to obey. The people fly from him like sheep from the shepherd's dog, but when left to themselves are not less disorderly. I looked forward therefore, not with indifference

* A Paul, somewhat less than sixpence English.

to

to the fête of San Giovanni. I was curious to see, since we had not a soldier left, what means would be taken to persuade the coachmen to leave the Corso, a street two miles long, at a given hour; and the multitude to range themselves on either side to let the horses pass. The twenty-fourth of June I concluded would be a day of riot and confusion. I was however mistaken. The riot and confusion happened sooner than I expected. Early in the morning of the ninth of June a mob assembled before the house of Senator G——, broke the windows, forced open the cellar doors, and carried off whatever they could find. The Senator himself only escaped hanging by foreseeing the danger, and retiring into the country. From the Senator's the mob went to another house, which they also plundered, and had the insolence to tell several gentlemen, who were looking on, that it would be their turn next. Still nothing was done on the part of Government. What could *they* do who had only a parcel of Sbirri under their command; fellows, that but too often deserve hanging themselves, and, who, however expert they may be at intrapping people who are sleeping quietly in their beds, never, on an honorable occasion, dare look danger in the face. The town was now at the mercy of the mob, who luckily having no head, acted with as little judg-

judgment as that of Lord —— in England. Those rioters lost time in sacking the tough walls of Newgate, when they might have been employed to more advantage at the Bank; and these let a whole morning slip away in plundering cellars for wine and oil, when the shops and houses of all the monied men in Florence were at their disposal. At last, however, they fell upon the Jews, and laid them under contribution. Danger now increased at every instant, and what before was riot, became rebellion. In vain Government, actuated more by fear than prudence, complied with all their demands:—in vain the most popular of the Nobility entreated them to desist;—in vain the Archbishop prayed:—they respectfully received his benediction, and continued plundering.

Such was the state of Florence, and such the conduct of the mob, when the butchers of the market, shocked at their brutality, issued out with no better weapons than their own knives, and put to flight a parcel of ragamuffins that ten dragoons on horseback might at any time have dispersed; and who, if they had continued as they first began, and had attacked their Governors only, might have hanged them all, one by one, so little disposed were the inhabitants of every class to stir in their defence. Different causes will sometimes produce the same effects. What the Govern-

Government of Florence did from imbecility, Macchiavel might have done from design. Seeing the mischievous disposition of some of the people, and the indolence of the rest, he would probably have suffered private property to have been attacked, for then each individual feels for himself;—even *butchers* feel!—and those will risk their lives to defend what belongs to them, who would not stir a step to save a Minister from hanging. Thanks to the butchers, all now is quiet, and we may sleep in peace. Now that we are no longer in danger, we have ten thousand men in arms:—I might also add, and not one soldier among them!

I should have told you that I was myself stopped at noon-day in the Piazza del Duomo by two of these sturdy beggars armed with clubs. When they found I was resolutely determined to give them nothing, one said to the other—"*He is a stranger, let him pass.*" I don't think I was much frightened, but I shall not soon forget their ugly faces.

LETTER XXIII.

COSIMO DE MEDICI, who bent the stubborn neck of the Florentine people to the yoke, was himself a merchant. At that time trade was encouraged, and Florence flourished. A change in the Government, soon after occasioned a change in the manners of the people. Honors were conferred; commerce despised; trade neglected; and Florence was reduced by degrees to what it now is—as little like what it once was, as I am to HERCULES. It was said of COSIMO I., with more wit than truth, that in establishing the Order of Saint STEFANO he had crucified the arts, alluding to the Cross the Knights wear on their breasts.

In VILLANI'S time the town of Florence annually made from seventy to eighty thousand pieces of cloth. He tells us, that the value, some years, was not less than *mille dugento migliaia*

gliaia di Fiorini d'oro (I use his own words), an immense sum.* The cloth manufactories, which supplied other countries, and were once the source of Florentine magnificence, now scarcely furnish enough for their own consumption, and even that of an inferior sort. In 1551, twenty thousand pieces of cloth were sold, which, at thirty crowns each, made the respectable sum of six hundred thousand sequins. In the year 1561, the number increased to thirty-three thousand; and in the reign of the Grand Duke FERDINAND, the cloth made annually amounted to three millions of crowns.—All this must appear wonderful to one who sees Florence in its present state, and does not know that at that time it furnished all the Levant, and a great part of Europe. English wool in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was worked in Tuscany, and returned in cloth: but, though the manufacture of cloth originated in Italy, it soon spread into other countries. LORENZO DEI MEDICI, who was himself a capital merchant, to save the expence of carriage, established a cloth manu-

* Il Fiorino d'oro, in the time of the Republic, was the same as the present Scudo Fiorentino of seven livres, about five shillings and threepence English.

factory

factory in England, with Florentine artists: from which imprudent speculation may be dated the origin of that branch of English commerce, and, in a great measure, the ruin of that of Tuscany;—I say in a great measure, for I fear they have acquired idleness to a degree that is in itself a bar to its advancement. Not long ago, some Genevois came to Florence to establish a manufactory of watches, bringing some ingenious workmen along with them; but they no sooner saw with whom they were to associate, than they abandoned the project, and returned from whence they came, wisely considering idleness as an epidemical disease that cannot be too carefully shunned by the industrious.

The silk trade is also on the decline, and partly from the same reasons. Other parts of Italy have improved this branch of their commerce, and Florence already feels the ill effects. I am even assured, that this year, in which the silk-worms have almost entirely failed, there is still silk enough remaining on hand to employ the manufacturers.

The thirteenth century seems to have been the epoch of Tuscan opulence. About the beginning of the fourteenth century the manufactures of silk and wool were so considerable, that Cosimo dei Medici became the most wealthy merchant ever known in Europe. The end of the

the fifteenth was the utmost period of her prosperity. When commerce was forsaken by the family of MEDICI, the Nobles also declined it: of course, it languished; and the discovery of America at the beginning of the sixteenth century, opening a new channel to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope, gave the fatal blow, from which it has never recovered. While commerce flourished, the riches of the individuals were the riches of the State. The MEDICI family were not only enabled to fight their own battles, but also those of their Allies; and Pope PIO V., when he acknowledged COSIMO I. Grand Duke of Tuscany, after speaking highly of his services, mentions his numerous armies of horse and foot; his fortresses, and his galleys, not only sufficient to defend his own coast, but that of Rome itself.

The introduction of titles proved shortly after the ruin of trade; and, instead of the Sovereign being the Prince of Bankers, as the Grand Duke FERDINAND was called, bankers now became Counts and Marquisses.

The Mercato Nuovo, where the Nobility at that time assembled every morning, as at the Broglio at Venice, was soon after deserted for the Casino; and the Loggia Rucellai, and others, preserve the names only of the noble families who once deigned to inhabit them.

There

There are some particularities concerning the Mercato Nuovo that I cannot forbear to mention. BERNARDO TASSO, originally a carpenter, was the architect. The three rows of columns are said to have separated the three different ages of the Nobility who frequented them; the old, the young, and the middle aged: thus forming three distinct societies of the same character, pursuits, and inclinations. In one of the columns is concealed a stair-case by BUONTALENTI. A stone formerly stood in the middle of this portico where bankrupts were publicly whipped—an excellent custom in a commercial country! Were every bankrupt in England to be thus publicly whipped on the Exchange of London, believe me, you would have fewer bankruptcies, less roguery, less prevarication, and less perjury. As this, though at present deserted spot, was once frequented by all the Nobility and principal Citizens of Florence, all kinds of arms were prohibited; and, to render it more respectable, manslaughter was immediately punished with death, and the estate forfeited. The Wild Boar in bronze, is a copy of that in the Gallery by PIETRO TACCA.

Ponte Vecchio is the common residence of all the silversmiths and jewellers of Florence. Tradesmen who deal in the same articles at

Canton,

Canton, reside in the same quarter of the town. It has its advantages. I wish every trade in every town had a particular spot allotted to it.

The Studio of PISANI, near the Prato Gate, is worth your notice. Vases, and other ornaments for chimney-pieces, in alabaster, are there worked with great taste and elegance.

The trade of Florence consists chiefly of perfumes, essences, and straw hats. Mechanical work, in general, is clumsily made. In many parts of the East, the inhabitants inherit the trade of their parents, and cannot exercise any other.—It was the custom at Athens when she flourished most. Though this restriction may not tally with our liberal ideas; though, in some instances, it may be a check to genius; yet, when to the master's professional knowledge, there is added the interest and affection of a father, and to the pupil the attention and obedience of a son, it must be considered as the surest means of perfection. The excellence of the workmanship where these principles prevail, form a striking contrast with the ruined state of arts and manufactures in Tuscany. Here each inhabitant, without any experience; without serving any apprenticeship; without consulting any other motive than his own caprice, is at liberty to exercise what trade he will; and calls himself master of an art, of which he scarcely knows

knows the rudiments: you will, consequently, observe in him less method than presumption, and will have occasion to blame both his indolence and incapacity;—give him any thing to copy, I speak from experience, he will constantly vary it, and always for the worse.

Under an arbitrary Government you seldom see much industry. When the people are not contented, they seldom look beyond the present moment: they get through the day as they can, and so far follow the doctrine of Scripture, that they literally leave the morrow to take care of itself. If domestic happiness by ill humor and contradiction be disturbed, that also originates but too often, I believe, in their mutual wants, and mutual dissatisfaction with the Government under which they live.—It may be otherwise when the people, as a spur to their industry, shall be put into better humor with the state: when the taxes on the first necessaries of life shall be lessened; monopoly prevented; and a brisker circulation of money procured by encouraging foreigners to reside amongst them. It is not industry alone, however necessary it may be to turn the balance of trade in favor of any nation, that is wanting; industry cannot exist without encouragement. In other countries, the tradesman looks forward to a time when he shall retire from business, and be

happy; and though that time may never come, or if it should, may not bring happiness along with it, yet the prospect is a pleasant one, and serves to smooth the rugged path of life he is doomed to tread. Here, on the contrary, the same dull, dreary perspective still remains; the lowest trades live literally from hand to mouth; and in the higher professions, little is to be gained: yet BARETTI tells us, that a young physician in Italy has it in his power to get a livelihood in a very short time—at the low rate of a livre a visit (about ninepence English), the utmost a young physician can pretend to—he must be the death of a fine number of patients first. The King of Prussia, when a certain physician, who had made a considerable fortune, was presented to him, said—" Monsieur le Medecin apparemment vous avez tué beaucoup de monde."—" *Beaucoup, Sire, beaucoup,*" replied the Doctor, " *mais moins, et avec moins de Gloire que votre Majesté.*"

LETTER XXIV.

IT has long been a question, whether an unlimited *commercio libero* (free commerce) as practised at present in Tuscany, be, or be not, an advantage to the State. Much has been said, and much written on the subject. Those who are its friends tell you that Florence has never experienced a scarcity of corn since that regulation took place; but, before, often. While its enemies talk highly of the flourishing state of Tuscany in the time of the MEDICI, when a free commerce was prohibited. I shall conclude that both are right in their assertions, but cannot agree with either in the conclusions drawn from them. The one does not enough consider that though the face of the country may be improved by cultivation, the towns suffer from the loss of their manufactures; the other should be reminded that there were some particularities in the time of the MEDICI which no longer exist:

—Cosimo I. had ships of his own that carried out merchandise on his own private account, and returned loaded with corn; he also encouraged his subjects to do the same, as an aid to Government; advanced them money; found them magazines; and by allowing a bounty on importation when corn was wanted, his granaries were constantly kept supplied, and famine prevented.

I confess myself more partial to the policy of the English Government that allows a bounty both on importation and exportation, as different circumstances require. The improvement of our marine probably makes no small part of the consideration; but it also acts as an encouragement to agriculture, and is a check to imposition. When the price of corn does not bear a just proportion to the expence and trouble it occasions, cultivation ceases; and on the other hand, when the first necessaries of life exceed in price what the common labourer can afford to pay, arts and manufactures perish—which, *cæteris paribus*, constantly flourish most where the necessaries of life are cheapest; and on them, in the opinion of many, the population and prosperity of a state principally depend.

It is a dangerous mistake to fancy that when corn is dear, the price of labour increases in proportion. The shoemaker dares not raise the price

price of his shoes though his family are starving. The poor trader always sells cheap, for he must sell to eat. When corn is dear the monopolizers are the principal gainers. It is not the riches of a few individuals, but the general ease of the middle class of inhabitants, or trading people, that makes a nation flourish.

However desirable commerce may be, exchange is only necessary when you have more of a commodity than you want. It is dangerous to dispose of bread, the first necessary of life, when the produce is not equal to the consumption. There is scarce a nation in Europe that at times does not prohibit exportation: it follows, therefore, that corn is not always to be bought. On the other hand, I have seen exportation prohibited; the price immediately fell: in consequence of which the corn was bought up by the neighbouring states, and there was presently after a scarcity. Unless smuggling and monopoly could be prevented, the remedy is worse than the disease. From whence I conclude, that the question is merely relative, depending on times and circumstances; that neither unlimited exportation, nor constant prohibition, are either of them a public benefit.

Est modus in rebus sunt certi denique fines
Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum.

That

That *monopoly* should be permitted, I own surprises me. Those who buy to sell again, are a heavy charge on a poor state. The very necessaries of life are bought up at a low price by a parcel of people who thus avail themselves of the labour of others, and are afterwards sold at an advanced price, to the great prejudice of the public, without any advantage to the cultivator.—This traffic, though highly unjust, is carried on not only at the gates of the town, but also in the markets: where it will end, I know not; but it increases daily, nor is any notice taken. In the time of the MEDICI, the price of every article was fixed, and monopoly as much as possible prevented. The quality of the bread was carefully examined, as well as the weight; and the baker was punished if it was ill baked: and so tender were they of the health of their subjects, that not only animals that died a natural death were not permitted to be sold, but even sour grapes were prohibited under a severe penalty.

To the astonishing imposition permitted at present in the markets, may be attributed, in a great measure, the extreme misery of the poorest sort of the inhabitants. Two pounds of bread, when the Grand Duke LEOPOLD became Emperor, was distributed by Government to the poor of Florence. Sixty-two thousand took the

the benefit of it, that is, three fourths of the inhabitants. It was even sent to my servants, who were in great danger of being all discharged for their meanness in accepting so pitiful a present. Upon an inquiry, made at the same time, it appeared, that the debts to the Monte, under the trifling sum of seven livres, amounted to twenty-three thousand crowns. There cannot, surely, be a more alarming proof of the misery of the inhabitants. The *Monte di Pietá* was established first at Florence, in the year 1496, to restrain the usury of the Jews. It has since been established all over Italy, but with conditions more or less favorable to the public. Every commodity of any kind is here taken in pawn. At Rome, formerly, all sums not exceeding thirty crowns, were lent without interest. It was liable to abuse;—many that were rich pawned their plate, and made a profit of the money.

The Florence market is well supplied with every kind of butchers' meat, except mutton; that you must get from Pistoia. The mutton of Florence totally differs from that of Astracan, which, we are told, is only inferior to our venison. The pork is excellent; but is only to be had during the winter months. The poultry is not to be commended; and you will regret *Les Poulardes de Lyon*, when you see the half-

starved

starved chickens on an Italian table. Game is scarce, and consequently dear: a hare, in the time of the MEDICI, cost only ten Soldi (about fivepence English); you cannot buy one at present for less than four or five Paul's. Though game is scarce, small birds are in the greatest plenty. In the spring of the year, quails and ortolans come hither from Africa to avoid the heat. In autumn, thrushes, linnets, chafinches, and other singing birds, arrive in flocks from the Continent to avoid the cold. We have also *Becca Fichi*, so called from their feeding on figs; they are a lump of fat, and much esteemed by those who like small birds: a goose, or a turkey, in your opinion, I know would have the preference. I cannot boast of our fish: it comes from afar, is very dear, and during the hot weather is seldom eatable: that which is sweet, has been kept in ice, and loses all its flavor. In the months of April, May, and June, the Tunny Fish arrives from Porto Ferrajo; when perfectly fresh, it is nearly as good as our salmon; when kept in oil, it supplies the convents in the winter.

The fruit is good, particularly figs and melons. The cherries are by much the largest I ever saw: for that fruit we are obliged to LUCULLUS, who brought it into Italy, after his defeat of MITHRIDATES, from the town of Ciresus,

Ciresus, in Pontus. The peaches called *poppa di Venere*, are of an extraordinary size and flavor. Grapes are nearly the same all over Italy; the Muscadine and Salamanna are, I think, the best. Pears and apples require a colder climate. Their way of selling them is fairer than ours; they are sold by weight. The rennet is the best apple. Strawberries last all the summer; when those of the gardens fail, you have those of the mountains: I regularly supped on them from the end of April to the beginning of October. Among the best fruits, I should not forget oranges—not those of Italy, but of Malta.

The rich, you find, live tolerably well at Florence;—it is the poor that are put to their shifts, and no work-houses are provided for them. Surely the astonishing number of beggars that encumber the streets, and importune passengers from one end of Italy to the other, is a disgrace to the Government, who should find them employment, and not suffer them thus to remain a partial tax on the benevolence of the public. Those who, without being in want, make begging a profession, are little entitled to our charity,—many more deserving objects pass every day unnoticed, because they are ashamed to beg.

At the Porta San Gallo, the evening's drive of

of the Beau Monde of Florence, your coach is constantly beset with miserable objects, who regularly relieve one another.* One fellow particularly offends me: he is perfectly healthy, and has no other pretence to beg than a young child that he carries on his shoulders, and secretly pinches, I believe, to excite compassion. What an employment for a man who is able to work, and what an education for a child!—One should, *ipso facto*, be sent to a work-house, and the other taken care of and educated at the expence of the public. The Lacedemonians wisely considered all their children as children of the state. This defect is not peculiar to Italy only; in France it is as bad, and beggars are not there less troublesome.—One of them being asked, why he did not work, being young and able, he replied—"*Ah! Monseignieur, si vous saviez combien je suis Paresseux!*"

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* Since changed for the Cascine.

LETTER XXV.

A Female panegyrist has remarked of the manners of the Florentines that they are polished into brilliancy. Surely the lady had in her eye the French of the last age, rather than the Florentines of this. It is not from those who have resided long in a country that you are to expect the most faithful account of the manners and customs of the inhabitants. It is impossible not to be in some degree prejudiced one way or the other; either for or against them. It is the common imperfection of human nature, nor do I expect to be more exempt from that failing than the lady herself. Having lived for some time in a habit of civility and friendship with the Florentines, I am become, I believe, almost as partial to their faults, as to my own. Many of them I may not perceive, and others I may wish to conceal. I am aware of my difficulties, but will endeavour to relate with fidelity,

fidelity, nor will I designedly either flatter or censure at the expence of truth. I shall confine my account to circumstances publicly known, rather than intrude into privacies where discretion is a virtue.

The Court, and with that it is my duty to begin, resides very little at Florence. They usually pass the spring at Castello, the summer and autumn at the Imperiale, and the winter at Pisa. Travellers therefore are seldom presented, yet those who are desirous to pay their court, are received by the Grand Duke and the Grand Duchess, with that gracious affability so peculiar to them both. The Palace partakes of the economy of the country. State and magnificence make no part of the expence of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the salaries of his household approach nearer to parsimony than extravagance. The Sovereigns are themselves contented with a thousand sequins a month each for pocket money, and the Grand Duchess spends the greatest part of hers in charity.

The style of living of the Grand Duke is best known to his valet de chambre; I can only relate what I hear:—that he keeps early hours, is very temperate, and dedicates the greatest part of his time to the good of his subjects.

The example of the Court is strictly followed by the Nobles as far as regards regularity and eco-

economy. It is a system that generally prevails both in the education of youth, and their conduct afterwards. Boys of fashion are not allowed to run about the streets in Florence, as in London. A tutor is appointed constantly to attend them, and an attention is shewn to their health and morals that might put an English parent to the blush.—I wish I could as readily commend the capacity of their instructors. Colleges and Professors are not wanting. The University of Pisa is deservedly looked upon as one of the best in Italy; but there is not a single instance at present of a Florentine Nobleman having been sent thither to study,—so little do they consider learning as a necessary qualification for a gentleman. The levelling system of the Tuscan Government, that embraces every opportunity to humble the Nobility, views with pleasure, and encourages with zeal, alliances that prejudice might condemn, and prudence disapprove. It is not impossible but this also may induce the Florentines to keep their sons at home. Improper connections at that age are more easily formed than broken. By a new law, seduction admits not of pecuniary compensation, and the seducer of a virgin, whatever be her condition of life, is obliged to marry her;—a law subject to very great abuses. How will you prove the seduction? How are you to be certain

certain she was a virgin? The cunning of Sancho Panca, in this instance, is preferable to the wisdom of Peter Leopold. Though prudence may, in some measure, justify the preference given in this country to a private education, yet the economy that accompanies it cannot be commended. When I tell you, that a tutor has the trifling sum of four or five crowns a month only, you will conclude that much instruction is not to be acquired at so cheap a rate. Those who are still more economical, hire an Abbé to walk out with their children, and thus save victuals and drink. Those peripatetics are well paid at two crowns a month. Strange as this education must appear, I scarcely know how to blame the Florentines. Learning in Tuscany is discouraged by system. They see that it has no friend at Court, and are but too apt to consider it as a useless incumbrance. At eighteen the young gentleman is of age, and has done with his master. He shortly after takes to himself a mistress; commences Cavalier Servente, with the consent and approbation of his parents,—and here all instruction ceases: it ceases, unluckily, at the very time the most useful knowledge is usually acquired; for experience teaches, that that which is done from obligation, is seldom done willingly; and that which is not done willingly,

lingly, is never done well, and sometimes not done at all.—CONDILLAC tells us, that the most useful knowledge we acquire, is not from our preceptors, but from ourselves.

The education of their daughters, I am told, is worse. If Miss is sent to a convent, she learns little else than to knit stockings; and if kept at home, is either left to the care of common servants, from whom no good can be expected, or is early initiated into Italian customs in the society of her Mamma—the duties and privileges of a Cavalier Servente not excepted.

Having censured, I hope not without reason, the system of education in this country, and, in some instances, the conduct of parents towards their children; I cannot deny myself the pleasure of approving, as I ought, the duty and affectionate attention of children to their parents. Filial piety, believe me, is more observable in Italy than in England; occasioned, probably, by the different mode of education. Our sons are sent early out of our houses, and delivered up to the care of others. We only see them at their holidays; then chiefly at their meals; and at other times have little of their company: they pass the greatest part of their time without any restraint, and soon lose all sense of attention and duty. Here it is otherwise; and when they are not in the company of their parents,

they

they have constantly a person to attend them, who is responsible for their conduct. Their dress, to be sure, is sometimes ridiculous; but their behaviour is strictly proper: with us, a boarding-school girl, and a school boy, are fit company for the servants only, to whose care they are usually consigned. The girl is an awkward stiff thing that is afraid to move; and the boy is as troublesome and as mischievous as a monkey.—That our system is better calculated to form men of the world, I will not deny; yet you will allow me to wish it were done with less injury to their health and morals.

Fathers, brothers, uncles, and aunts; wives, sons, and daughters, and their respective families, live all together under the same roof, out of economy:—not always without a feeling of that contempt for each other which familiarity is said to occasion. This outward appearance of cordiality is the cause of innumerable private differences; and the several branches of the same family, thus heterogeneously united, are but too often a mutual plague to each other.—At Pekin, indeed, where the population is said to amount to three millions, it may be necessary to crowd two or three generations together, but not at Florence.

A wife in this country, I am sorry to say, has but too often a separate interest from her husband,

band, and is frequently treated like a stranger in her own house. She is not trusted with the fingering of any money; she pays no bills, unless, sometimes, her own; and has a trifling assegnamento (pin-money), of about ten or fifteen crowns a month, to supply all her wants: and, in many families, so great is the economy, so regulated the expenditure, that if she gives a dish of coffee, or glass of lemonade, to a friend, it is paid for out of her own pocket.—If you observe how well they dress, and consider the insufficiency of the means, you will be in fear for human frailty.—Husbands take care! beauty can never ask in vain,—and it is needless to remind you, that gratitude is a virtue.

Notwithstanding this dangerous economy towards their wives, the Florentines are remarkable for an extraordinary piece of extravagance towards their daughters-in-law, peculiar to themselves. When a girl of fashion marries, the father-in-law provides the *Corredino*, that is, a wardrobe, containing every part of her dress, in great profusion: this she finds at his house upon her arrival, lest the *Corredo*, provided by her own family, should not be ready. Curiosity carried me, with half the town of Florence, to see that of the Sposa Riccardi. The room had the appearance of a fair; the walls were hung with gowns, riding habits, cloaks, hats, and

nets. A long table in the middle, and several others that surrounded it, were completely covered with every article of wearing apparel, and seemed a provision for life. Expence was not spared, nor was convenience alone considered. I observed towels with fine Flanders lace, which I conclude the sposa will have the good sense to apply to better purposes. The addition of the Corredino to that of the Corredo is surely an unnecessary piece of extravagance, and unless the lady prudently disposes of one half, she cannot wear out the other while the fashion lasts. The Corredo, found by the family of the sposa, is reckoned as part of her portion; the greatest part of which might be more usefully employed.

By an old law, in the time of the MEDICI, the expences attending marriage ceremonies were exceedingly limited. Four strangers only were to be invited; four dishes provided; and a gentleman was severely reprimanded by Government for having laid out a whole sequin on his wedding dinner. Compare this with the expences of the present day:—three great *Gala* dinners have been given by the family above mentioned; one on the wedding day, the others on the days following. All their relations and all their friends were invited. The very sugar-plumbs, that it is usual to send on these occa-

sions

sions to their acquaintance, cost the Marquis RICCARDI a thousand crowns. Our custom is more decent. We give our dinners before the wedding, and leave the happy couple in private afterwards. In this country the conversation at these public dinners puts modesty to the blush, and the sposa hears enough on the wedding day, and those that succeed it, to debauch her mind most completely, if it be not already done. Matrimony, at best, is a very indecent piece of business, think what you will of it; and virtue exposes in this instance what vice with more decency conceals. Among the sumptuary laws of former times it is curious to observe that the wives of citizens were forbid wearing more than three rings at a time.—I think, while they were about it, they might as well have confined them to one only.

The news of the day occupies all Florence. SANTEUIL placed himself in a confessional at Paris, and a woman taking him for a Confessor, confessed every thing to him, and then asked his absolution:—"What," said he, "do you take me for a Confessor?"—"If you are not, why did you listen to me?"—"Why did you tell me?" replied SANTEUIL.—"Well, Sir, I will acquaint the *Bishop*."—"And, if you do, Madam, *I will acquaint your husband*." Whether Signor P— P— M— thought fit to imitate this

gentleman, or was prompted to it by a natural impulse, I know not; but he is in disgrace for a frolic of the same kind, and it is as yet unknown what will be the consequences.

LETTER XXV.

FOUR thousand crowns is a good Florentine income: a sum, at least, equal to as many thousand pounds in the hands of an Englishman. You have already seen, that the assegnamento of a wife does not cost much—the whole additional expence is computed at one thousand two hundred crowns. The sons, when they become men, are usually allowed ten or twelve crowns a month to find themselves in clothes and pocket money. The daughters, who are found in every thing, have a sequin given them, now and then, that they may have some money in their pockets. —Is not a quarterly or monthly allowance preferable? they would then learn to make the most of a little, and know what they have to depend on.

Every expence in this country is calculated. The usual calculation is two hundred crowns a year for a coach and pair of horses, coachman included;

included: sixty crowns each footman, and forty for each maid. Gluttony is not the vice of an Italian. A Florentine Nobleman will agree with his cook to provide dinner and supper at the rate of three pauls a head for both; bread, wine, oil, and firing, not included. The pocket never suffers, and the constitution is frequently a gainer. Others fix a certain sum for their daily expences: if they exceed it one day, parsimony the next brings matters even.

An Italian dinner usually consists of a soup, which never fails winter and summer; a piece of bouilli; a fry of some kind or other; a ragout; and the *roti*, which, whether it be a piece of meat, or a few small birds, is served up last. The soup is no better than broth, being the essence of the bouilli only, which, of course, is boiled to rags; and the roast meat being usually soaked in water before it is put to the fire, loses all its flavor. The table-cloth is not taken off neither here nor in France; nor, I believe, in any part of the Continent:—*their* tables are made of the commonest wood, and are always dirty;—*our* tables are both handsome and clean, so we may use our pleasure.

Butter, you will sometimes see as a side dish: it is rather a rarity, oil being commonly used in their kitchens. Raw ham, Bologna sausages, figs, and melons, are eaten at the first course.

Salt

Salt meat, unless it be hams and tongues, is totally unknown. No boiled leg of pork, and peas-pudding; no bubble and squeak;—vulgar dishes, it is true, but excellent notwithstanding: nor have they the *petits plats*, in which the French so much excel, to supply their places. In short, you must not expect good cookery in a country where all the servants are cooks. I have five men in my house, and four of them have acted in that capacity. I am afraid, the worst is he whose business it is to dress the dinner: my coachman is said to be famous at a made dish.

Though few breakfast, all sup; a custom that cannot but be unwholesome in a country where it is usual to go to bed immediately after. JOHNSON, who was not partial to the Scotch, used to say, that if an epicure could remove by a wish in quest of sensual gratifications, he would breakfast in Scotland.—If breakfast was that gentleman's favorite meal, he did well not to come into Italy, where the comforts of it are unknown. It is not allowed to servants. It is not reckoned by the Vetturino, who supplies you with every necessary on your journey; and those who indulge in this luxury, are contented with a dish of coffee or chocolate; a few figs, or a bunch of grapes.—To complete the day, according to JOHNSON's idea, I think his epicure

cure should dine in London; take his afternoon's *goute* in Switzerland; and sup at Paris.

It would be unpardonable, in writing to an Englishman, to talk of the table, and not mention wine: yet I much doubt if Florence wine, though COSIMO III. made presents of it to most of the Sovereigns in Europe, and though Queen ANNE is said to have preferred it to any other, will please a palate accustomed to Claret, Champagne, and Burgundy. The most esteemed are the Aliatico, Chianti, and Monte Pulciano. That which you drink in England for Florence wine, is Chianti,—even to this brandy is added at Leghorn to give it strength: no other will bear the sea. The common wine of the country I conclude is weak, as you seldom see a man drunk in the streets, and in good company, never.

Dress is no article of expence. You are not obliged, as in France, to have different clothes for the different seasons: you are at liberty to dress as you please; and an English frock may be worn throughout the year. We are told, that a country gentleman appeared at the Opera at Paris the beginning of autumn in his summer suit: he was stared at as a monster, and *habit d'eté, habit d'eté,* was repeated all over the theatre. A friend of ours, by some strange fatality, wore a pair of point-ruffles in the month

month of May: the impropriety would have utterly ruined another man;—this gentleman, who is a man of wit, excused himself by saying—*he had a cold.* The Florentines are too wise to trouble themselves with numberless suits of clothes, for the sole benefit of their tailors. They go to the Opera in frocks; and, during the Carnival, to the Balls in bauttes. They have a dress coat, and a *Gala* carriage; the latter lasts them their lives,—nor do they, like some that shall be nameless, change their carriages every two or three years to enrich their coach-makers. They have also *Gala* liveries; but they are made to last as long as they can. Every-day liveries must last two years: those who make a figure, give two; one for the summer, the other for the winter,—but each is to last two seasons.

I cannot commend their taste; their very magnificence is inelegant. Behind the same carriage you will frequently see one footman very tall, the other very short. I have just met two such, who, being cloathed in green, looked like the sign of Robin Hood and Little John. You will also see one with a cocked hat, the other with a round one. There is a want of feeling in these trifles somewhat beyond a want of taste. Strictly speaking, even their hair should be dressed alike; and,

and, if they wear queues, they should be of equal length.

In all countries some customs are remarkable. When first I knew Florence, about twenty years ago, an odd custom prevailed at Court;—all the men curtsied to the Grand Duke and the Grand Duchess; foreigners only were permitted to bow, who were supposed to know no better.

A refusal is expressed by the fingers in Italy as in other countries by the head. A common salutation is with the fingers up; and they call you, with the fingers down.

It is said that the voice, in speaking, seldom rises higher, or sinks lower than three notes and a half. It is otherwise here; they change sometimes from their natural voice to a falsetto, till you are ready to laugh in their faces.

They tell you, that if it rains on the third of April, it is to continue to rain for forty days after. We run a risk of losing all our faith in this country.

The Florentine Nobility were, as I have said, originally merchants; book-keepers were then necessary. They have retained the custom ever since, and in some families not less than eight or ten of those persons are constantly employed—I know not how.

The Noblesse sell wine, and hang out the sign of

of an empty flask at the Palace window. A retail trade, like this of the Florentine Nobility, an English wine merchant would think beneath his dignity. The best tap going at present is that of the Bishop of Fiesole.

It is ridiculous to see a Sposa Monaca dressed out to the height of the fashion, and driven about from one end of the town to the other. Mercy on us, what a mistake is here!—Content more easily proceeds from ignorance than conviction; nor is it prudent to indulge in any pleasures that are not always within our reach.

The kitchen frequently is at the top of the house. I asked a reason of a Florentine friend, and he gave me two;—one, he said, was to prevent the smoke of the charcoal and smell of the dinner; the other, to render it more difficult for the servants to carry any thing away. As they are at board wages, the vulgar adage, *safe bind, safe find*, is never forgotten. Their masters know they are not scrupulous, and never put temptation in their way.

It was the custom in the time of JUVENAL to blow the fire with their mouths,—it is so now. I have a fellow in my family whose mouth is better than any bellows.

The extreme unction which is administered to those who are dying, is carried publicly, and in procession:—a custom as improper as unnecessary.

sary. The tinkling bell and hoarse voices of those that accompany it, are unpleasant sounds even to those who are well; and, at a time of epidemy, when deaths are frequent, might be fatal to those who are sick.—A Spanish proverb says:—" If you think you *shall* die, you *will* die."

They wear mourning but a short time for the nearest relation, and that not constantly. I have known a husband marry two months after his wife's decease. It is true he was an elderly gentleman, and had no time to lose.

Ladies in child-bed keep the house for forty days, and do not get up till the twelfth day; yet many Contadinas, after the third day, are out at work in the fields. I have read that in some parts of America the wife is no sooner delivered of her burden than she gets up, and her husband keeps his bed; she does the work of the house, and he goes through all the ceremonies of a lady in the straw. I had nearly forgotten one custom that I think will surprise you:—they *feed their cats*, and *poison their dogs*. Though held in less veneration in Italy than in Egypt, the cat still seems to be an object of general affection. Florence swarms with them. Here are people who make a trade of feeding them, and are paid by the inhabitants, who, notwithstanding their great economy, *keep more cats*

than

than catch mice. Dogs, on the other hand, are scarce:—that amiable and friendly animal is not only neglected, but, during the summer months, is poisoned in the streets.—If you are here in the summer, take care of Rover.

I must leave off.—My house is in an uproar of laughter, at the expence of a poor cobbler, my opposite neighbour. My servant having frequently missed different sums of money out of a drawer in my bed-chamber, he suspected the porter, and engaged his friend the cobbler to watch and detect him. The affair did not appear difficult,—the money was always taken on a Monday, which was the day my weekly bills were settled; it was also observed, that the robbery was committed at the time the other servants were all of them at dinner: these circumstances caused the porter to be suspected; and it was thought that he used a false key, as the drawer was kept constantly locked. The cobbler, who had readily accepted the office, made light of it; he used the common expression of his countrymen, *lascia fare*,—and longed for the arrival of Monday to shew his prowess.—At length Monday came, and the honest cobbler, determined to take the thief, placed himself where he could best observe all that passed in the chamber, and catch him in the fact. It was not long before he appeared:—he was cautious

and

and cunning,—he secured the door,—he listened if all was quiet:—there was a closet in the room, he examined it carefully, and then went to the chest of drawers to begin his operation.—The cobbler now thought he had him safe enough,—but unluckily, as the Devil would have it, the porter, recollecting that he had not looked under the bed, lifted up the *valance*, and discovered our friend.—It is not easy to conceive the ridiculous figure the poor cobbler made, lugged out from his hiding place, taken prisoner, and brought down stairs, as a culprit, by the very thief he had promised to detect.—He seems determined never to turn thief-taker again. The porter is discharged.

LETTER XXVII.

THOSE who, like you, live in one continued round of public amusement, and, in more senses of the word than one, keep no Lent, cannot conceive the joy that an Italian, whose passions are heightened by a warmer sun, and whose diversions are chiefly confined to this season only, feels at the approach of the Carnival.—Even at Florence, not the gayest town in Italy, it is not without its advantages.

Masking formerly began on Saint ANTONIO's day; it is now permitted the last fortnight of the Carnival only:—it then gave the ladies opportunities of intrigue, which the jealousy of their husbands prevented all the rest of the year.—Italian husbands are no longer jealous, and concealment is no longer necessary.—Wives are mistresses of their own persons; receive what company they please in their own houses; and the black veil which they wear when they walk out

out in the morning alone, conceals them as effectually as a mask :—this, and rooms hired in remote parts of the town, are temptations to intrigue peculiar to Florence.—In short, *amateures* are so plenty, that the *professeures* are starving. The principal advantage they derive from the last days of the Carnival, is that of completely getting rid of a troublesome companion, a *Cavalier Servente*, who is then left to shift for himself.—It is curious to see fine ladies, who, at another time, cannot stir a step without two horses to draw them along; two Cavalier Serventes to support them; and two footmen, one to clear the way, and the other to hold up their train: it is curious to see them disguised in their bauttes, walking in the streets alone, and from one theatre to another, with all the ease, and all the assurance, of our sex.—They go alone to the Casino,—alone to the Festa di Ballo,—visit whom they please,—and enjoy the most unqualified liberty of men, during the last days of the Carnival.—They assume a freedom their inferiors dare not pretend to; for, though jealousy in the Nobility is laughed out of countenance, it is still visible among the Bourgeoisie, where the husband maintains his authority, and the wife is always obedient, and sometimes chaste.

In England, the theatres have one day of rest

out

out of the seven: on the Continent they have not even that. I remember when I first left my own country, I fear near thirty years ago, I arrived at Brussels on a Sunday:—it was late in the evening, and the street was crouded with carriages in waiting at the play-house. That you may be better able to judge of my astonishment, I must tell you that I had never heard of such doings in my life, and concluded that before the morning the Devil would fly away with them all. Bad example, my good friend, is a dangerous thing. The Sunday following I went to the play-house myself. The different appellation of the Sabbath is expressive of the different use that is made of it. With us it is called a holyday, or a day to be kept *holy*; here it is called a *fête* (festival), and consequently a day of merriment.

Twelve Theatres were formerly open at Florence during the Carnival; they are now reduced to six; a number, one might think, more than sufficient for the number of inhabitants, and yet it frequently happens that all are full. I have nothing to remark of either of them, except that the boxes are dark. The Florentines never use lights, partly to be more at their ease, and partly out of economy. It is at the theatre you see the natural disposition of the people. They are lively—animated—awake to every impres-

sion. When a new play pleases, and the curtain drops, they not only call for the Author, but all the principal Actors are made to pass over the stage to receive their share of the applause. If an Iago, or some such villain, be among them, he is sure to be received with groans and hisses; a circumstance which does as much honor to their own sentiments, as to the ability of the actor.

The Comedy I saw last night is founded on a fact of such extraordinary circumstances as could not be credited, were it not authenticated by the best historians of that time. We are told, that on the third of October 1400, GINEVRA DEGLI AMIERI, wife of FRANCESCO AGOLANTI, a Florentine Nobleman, being in a trance, and thought to be dead, was on the same day removed to the sepulchre of her family on the side of the Duomo, near to the Campanile: that coming to herself, about two o'clock in the morning, and perceiving where she was by the light of the moon, the stone of the vault, by a strange piece of good fortune, not having been fastened down, she delivered herself, not without difficulty, from the horrid mansion; and staggered, weak as she was, to her own house. Her husband hearing a violent knocking at the door at so late an hour, looked out of the window, but he no sooner saw her pale figure in her shroud, than he fancied it

was

was her ghost come to upbraid him for his cruelties (for they lived on ill terms together), and ran away. She then made a last effort to the house of ANTONIO RONDINELLI, a former, but unfavored lover. By him she was gladly received, and by his means soon after recovered. You will be glad to hear, however extraordinary it must appear, that the first marriage was set aside; and GINEVRA given to the man by whom she had been so kindly received, and so miraculously recovered. The street which leads from the vault to the house where she lived, is to this day called *Via della Morte.*

The price of entrance at all the theatres is as moderate as you could wish. A serious opera, is not dear at *three pauls;* a burletta, at *two;* a comedy, at *one;* and at the little theatres, *four crazie* only, somewhat less than *three pence English.* Men usually go into the pit. Boxes are always to be hired for the night, and, at the comedies, for a few pauls, unless you send your *Lacquais de Place,* who will always cheat you when he can. Moderate as these expences are, those who are *appaltati* pay considerably less.*

* A kind of subscription which admits you when you please.

At the serious opera, it does not exceed one paul a night: this is the price paid by the Nobility; the towns people pay less; and many are *appaltati* at the little theatres out of economy, for the oil they consume at home would cost them more. A young Englishman at Turin received a letter from his father, in the middle of the Carnival, directing him to set out immediately for Rome. He was unwilling to leave a place where he had found a mistress much to his liking, but did not know how to extricate himself: he thought, however, of an expedient. His father was an old miser, who had made an immense fortune by strictly observing that excellent rule, of never throwing away a single halfpenny: he, therefore, told him, that though it was his wish to obey his commands immediately, and without delay, yet as, out of economy, he had *appaltatied* himself at the theatre for the whole Carnival, he concluded he would approve of his staying till it was ended.

Our present Ballet at the Pergola is the most bloody I ever saw,—the principal characters are all slain. It put me in mind of that famous Italian tragedy where, towards the end of the last act, all the personages withdraw for a general engagement.—After a short pause, the prompter makes his appearance on the stage, and says—

" Udi-

" Uditofi, m'accorgo che aspettate
Che nuova della pugna alcun vi porti
Ma l'aspettate in van', son' *tutti morti*." *

If you are fond of dancing, you may have enough of it the last fortnight of the Carnival; besides the balls at the different theatres, others are given at the Casino, where, when you have been once presented, you go without invitation. For the Coreofili (a subscription ball given by the Nobility) strangers obtain tickets by means of their minister, or may buy them for a few pauls in the street. *Feste di Ballo* are also frequently given by the Cittadini, and your banker, or any other Italian friend, can easily get you admitted. A bautta is the best dress upon all these occasions; and, though it gives a disagreeable gloom to every assembly, is very convenient, particularly to the women, who have no longer the trouble of a toilette, but as they are in the morning, remain all day. The bautta, with its white mask, is frightful; with the mask off, though they all look like Edward the Black Prince with his beaver up, is not unbecoming: it buttons over the lower part of the face, and

* Spectators, I perceive that you wait
Till some one brings you news of the battle;
But you wait in vain—they are all slain.

hides

hides the chin only; the hair is pulled forward, and when the hat is well put on, most of the women look handsome.

You must not expect at an Italian masquerade to see the same variety of dresses as at the Hay Market. The Venetian bautta is common to all. Humor is not understood,—no one masks with an intention to promote it; the utmost effort is sometimes to shew a handsome dress, and a quantity of diamonds, which the Italian ladies have in the greatest profusion. It is probable that some of them are false.—No bad way, let me tell you, of making up the deficiency of pin-money, or losses at the gaming table. An English lady thought of this expedient, but she thought of it too late:—when she sent for her jeweller to dispose of her brilliants, and put false stones in their stead, he said he would readily have obliged her, but it was already done *by order of her husband.* To return to the masquerade. When a beautiful young woman represents an ugly old witch; when a little delicate gentleman represents a woman, or a lusty gentlewoman represents a man; they may deceive their most intimate acquaintance, and contribute to the merriment of the scene:—but an ORPHEUS and EURIDICE, covered with diamonds, stalking about the whole night arm in arm, their heads continually moving from side

to

to side, like the pendulum of a clock, without a single word ever coming from their lips, are surely more to be pitied than admired.—ORPHEUS, indeed, had an opportunity of regaining my good opinion. He stood a considerable time where a parcel of awkward people were dancing more like bears than human creatures; —had he but once struck his lyre, I could have forgiven him all the rest.

During the last fortnight of the Carnival, we have five Corso's, and all the carriages in Florence drive round the *Piazza Santa Croce* in grand gala. One gentleman has a coach of porcelain.—I have often thought of the havock our hackney coachmen would make of it at Ranelagh. The two last days, all the bauttes of Florence assemble under the *Uffizzi*;—and you may conceive a just idea of the discontent of the country from the general gloom, which, like an infectious vapour, expands itself all over Tuscany, at a time of uncommon festivity, even at Rome itself.

The Carnival over, it is curious to observe the alteration made in a few hours by a few *ashes* in the manners of the people. The churches are now as much frequented as the theatres were before; and they listen with the same attention to the preacher, as they did to harlequin.—Having been long used

to

to the insipid dulness of an English curate, I could not relish at first the enthusiastic warmth of an Italian friar: I was only astonished at the retentive memory of those religious orators, who are able to repeat every day a fresh sermon of an hour's length, without looking at a note, or the least hesitation: I can now listen to them with pleasure, for their discourse is usually confined to moral duties;—and delivered in a manner highly calculated to engage and fix the attention of their audience. LE PERE ARRIUS said—" When LE PERE BOURDALOUE preached at Rouen, the tradesmen forsook their shops, lawyers their clients, physicians their sick; but when I preached there the year following, I set all to rights,—*every man minded his own business.*"

Besides the five churches, where sermons are regularly preached every morning for such as are devout, the Casino stands open morning, noon, and night, for the idlers and gamblers of both sexes; but so strict are they respecting whom they shall receive, that the wife of a man of the first nobility, if not noble herself, cannot be admitted. This may be the reason why the ladies put upon their visiting cards, Lucrezia A—— *nata* B——; unless they are afraid one should suspect them not to be born at all.—The famous ASPASIA, the amiable friend of PERI-

CLES,

CLES, would not meet with the same indulgence and cordiality at Florence, she did at Athens.—It is not talents,—it is not merit,—rank only gains admittance: and yet, without virtue, what is family!—I had some difficulty to make an Italian Count comprehend, how I could be a Gentleman, and not a Nobleman; that the Nobility in England were Magistrates, and part of the legislature; and that we country gentlemen, Lords of Manors, were the Counts and Marquisses of other countries: that the eldest son of a Peer, till he becomes a Peer himself by the demise of his father, is only a Commoner; and those that have the titles of Lords, have it by courtesy only. It was also necessary to explain to him how Gentlemen became Peers; some by inheritance, some by parliamentary interest, and some by extraordinary abilities: that certain law offices of themselves made Peers of Solicitors and Attorneys: that the defence of a town, or destruction of a fleet, have justly conferred those honors, which, at another time, the caprice of a Minister has less honorably bestowed on his friends, or his enemies.—Family has seldom been considered in either case: political talents have at all times recommended possessors of mean birth to this mark of ministerial favor: and it is but of late years that the respectable family

family of COURTENEY, allied to more Crowns than one, has been raised to the Peerage.

The visiting hour in the morning, is from twelve till two. In the evening, it varies according to the season. It is the custom in this country to keep one servant constantly in waiting in the antichamber; they take it by turns. We ring our bell, and nobody comes.—When I was a young man, and had one servant only, I called WILLIAM, and WILLIAM came: afterwards, when I had many, and called *who is there?*—no one answered. I must, however, acquaint you, that as it is usual to sleep after dinner in summer all over Italy, every servant follows the example of his master; and should you visit at that hour, you may knock and not be heard.—It is no wonder, since the Spanish soldiers at the siege of Gibraltar regularly took their *meridiana* (afternoon's nap), notwithstanding the noise of all the cannon of the citadel. The ancient Romans, who had also their porter, that he might be constantly at his post, had him chained to the door.

The rooms are so darkened to keep out the sun, that you can hardly find your way across them, and for some time are unable to discover the countenance of the person near whom you sit. We open our windows to let in the air; here

here they are kept shut to keep it out,—and both are in the right. They inhabit the ground floor during the heat of summer, and ascend by degrees as the winter advances, preferring in cold weather the third story to any other. I should have told you, that some strip themselves after dinner in summer, and get into bed; and thus, in some measure, make two days of one.

At the Ventitre, all go to the Corso, and from thence to the theatre. The heat is so great at Florence in the summer, that few stir out before the evening; but the air is so perfectly dry and wholesome, that they remain in the streets, and on the benches in the squares, the greatest part of the night. Nothing can surpass a summer's night in Italy.—A bright moon; a clear sky; a temperature the most desirable; music in the streets; and love and contentment every where.

After Milan, you will have no more invitations to dine or sup.—Hospitality would not be consistent with the character of economy the Florentines have so justly acquired: nor, for political reasons, are their houses open to strangers, at all hours, with the same freedom as in many parts of Italy. I must, however, mention a ridiculous circumstance that happened to me the other morning, as an exception.—I visited an English lady, who excused herself from receiving me because she was in bed. I

then went to an Italian lady, who desired I would wait a few minutes till she got into bed.—I must now explain.—This lady, who was indisposed, was at that instant getting out of a warm bath. Ladies, both in France and Italy, receive company at their toilettes, and even when in their beds, without ceremony.—My fair countrywomen will use their own discretion, and will be on their guard against adopting any foreign customs that may not become them in their own country.

LETTER XXVIII.

THOUGH a Newmarket man must most thoroughly despise an Italian race, yet an account of the manner of treating and training horses in this country may not be unacceptable to one who I know is fond of them.

In all their stables there is much to condemn, and nothing to imitate. You will scarcely credit me when I tell you that the horses heads are never suffered to touch the ground, lest, as they are kept on short allowance, they should eat up their litter; the poor animal is thus made to take his rest, if he can, his head suspended at least two feet higher than his body.

The first time I saw my horse dressed by an Italian groom, I was in fear for his life. The fellow, who was near six feet high, began by taking fast hold of his tail with both his hands; he then pulled at it with all his might, as if he intended

tended to pull it off. Not contented with that, he next seized him by both his ears, as if he had meant to pull his head off also.

They shoe their horses altogether as ill as they dress them. They not only pare away too much of the hoof which nature designed to defend the foot, but the weight of the shoes, and largeness of the nails, oblige you, out of compassion to your horse, to keep that part longer than, strictly speaking, it ought to be: besides, they seldom open the heel, or keep the shoe sufficiently large not to contract the foot.

They never cut their horses, from an idea that it makes them start. When cut late, possibly it may, though horses do not always start from fear. Sometimes it is a defect in the sight, but proceeds oftner from caprice and wantonness. A tired horse seldom starts. I castrated one of my horses the other day, and was asked, how I could be so cruel.—They forget that they castrate their men.

The usual allowance of corn is fifteen staia a month for a pair of coach horses; and thirty pounds of straw a day, at twelve ounces to the pound, litter included. The horses, even of the Grand Duke, eat no hay. A saddle horse is allowed a quarter of a staia a day, and twenty pounds weight of straw. Horses in this country are not fed enough. In England you are in the

other

other extreme,—a fault on the right side, if prompted by humanity.

We break in our horses in the lightest carriage. Here they have a heavy one, made on purpose, which they fill full of people!—This is beginning at the wrong end; it is like teaching a child first to read, and then to spell. The manner in which they couple their horses must prevent them driving with any tolerable exactitude. Each horse is separate from the other; the coupling rein being fixed to the pad on his companions back; nor has the coachman any command whatever over it. When they put six horses together, the traces are so long, and the distance of one pair from the other so great, that it is highly ridiculous. The reason an Italian gentleman gave me is not less so—that it shews the excellence of the coachman who thus has not a little difficulty to keep the legs of one horse out of the traces of another. This difficulty, however, is made up to him in his reins, for he has two only in his hand: to these the leaders are coupled, within his reach, it is true, but at arms length. Six horses take up the room of ten. This, and a tall heavy fellow in jack-boots whose legs, which look like wooden ones, stick out beyond the shoulders of his horse, never fail to give the whole equipage a very uncomely appearance.

Phaetons are much in fashion among the young

young men at Florence. I heard a very ugly fellow say, that he only wanted a high phaeton, and a pair of English horses, to be as much *un homme a bonne fortune* as the best of them.—To us whips, these charioteers appear very ridiculous. They sit on the left side, and drive with their hats off. They have dropped the insipid formality of giving the right hand in their coaches, where it is a matter of indifference; and still observe it in their phaetons, where it is really a nuïsance, and not without danger to the eyes of their companion.—When the PRINCE OF WALES drives any lady of his acquaintance, he sits on the right hand: when he acts the coachman, he wisely puts himself in the coachman's place.—The example of the best bred man in Europe, if they are not incorrigible, one would think, might set them right. An extraordinary carriage has lately made its appearance, belonging to a Bolognese Nobleman: a car, in imitation of the ancients, with four horses abreast. It is on two wheels, and the gentleman, who drives himself, stands upright:—thus the heroes fought at the Trojan war. Low was the car, and open behind; conveniently constructed to get up or down—to fight or fly. This modern Paris is the admiration of all Florence.

You who pique yourself on being a good whip, and, without a compliment, drive a set of horses

horses almost as well as your coachman, what think you of a gentleman* who drives sixteen horses, eight pair, without a postillion?—This he has frequently done in the narrow streets of Florence. You may think, perhaps, that I presume on the privilege of a traveller, and expect me to reduce the number of my horses,—as another did the length of his monkey's tail:—but, Sir, you are mistaken.—I repeat it, *eight pair of horses without a postillion.*—I have not only the gentleman's own word for it, the fact is authenticated by thousands who have seen it.

If you have pleasure in good horses, you must bring them with you. The razza Gentile introduced by Prince FERDINAND, son of COSIMO III., from Tunis, are much degenerated: and, though the Grand Duke sells many of his colts and cast horses by auction, it is not often there are any good ones among them.—By the bye, sales by auction, however general the practice, is a very unfair way of dealing,—unless, as they sell fish in Holland, beginning high, and lowering till a price is offered, and then the first bidder is the buyer:—or when, as TATTERSALL says—"*These horses are to be sold without reserve, and for what they will*

* IL COMMENDATORE PAZZI.

 fetch."

fetch."—It then becomes a kind of lottery, and it is not impossible but you may be a gainer; but when the commodity put up to auction is bought in by the proprietor, unless the price offered exceeds the value, and no one can be so good a judge of that as the proprietor himself, it is taking, let who will do it, an unfair advantage of the ignorance or folly of the public.

I am at a loss what account to give you of their training. Though it is not possible for horses to be trained properly in a country where they have no equality of ground or turf to gallop upon; yet, without doubt, they might easily be better looked after than they are at present. They might be dressed oftener; have more corn allowed; more straw to lie down upon; and have hay to eat, instead of their litter: instead of water given them in the stable, as much as they can drink, and at all hours; they might have a proper quantity twice a day at fixed hours, and between their gallops:—instead of irregular exercise, now a great deal, now none at all; and sweats improperly given; both might be made regular, and at all times suited to the strength and condition of the horse: and, what is not less material, he might be put on the muzzle over night, instead of having both victuals and drink given him a few hours before he starts.

I should

I should gain little credit were I to relate all the follies I have seen them commit. An Italian friend, who had put his horse under my direction, sent his groom secretly, the night before running, with a hat full of bread, lest his horse should be starved. I have known them at starting put brandy into their ears,—*aqua regia* up their fundament,—and I saw one horse run with wildfire on his back.

Ridiculous as these races are, training is not less necessary than it is with us. The horse has no Jockey to moderate his ardor, and preserve his wind; but is at the extremity of his speed from the first moment to the last.—You have heard, without doubt, that they wear a kind of harness, to which several round prickly balls are loosely hung, and goad them as they run: thus the willing, and unwilling horse, contrary to all manner of justice, feel the spur alike. My horses wore few of those balls, and were more wounded by the balls of others as they passed them, than by their own.

I never told you, I believe, that, having no hounds, and being destitute of amusement of every kind, I bought a couple of race horses. One of them was excellent; but, except at Pistoia, where he won me a piece of velvet, with which I covered a couple of sofas, I was out of pocket by his victories.—You must not think,

my good Sir, that these prizes are all clear gain. The fees of the winning horse at San Giovanni amount to many crowns, without reckoning at least thirty more given to the populace, who assemble immediately after the race before your door;—money that may truly be said to be thrown out of the window, since it does little good, and falls to the lot of the most robust, not to the most in want. I must now tell you, that after I had taught my Jockey (not without difficulty, for he was as obstinate as he was ignorant), how to make his horse win; he soon found out, without any teaching, how to make him lose whenever it suited his interest.—I have always been of opinion, that the shortest follies are the best, so I turned off my jockey, and left off training.

The Palio (or horse race) is not on an open Down, as in England, but in the street, which is covered with sand on purpose. It is a strait course, of about a mile and a half in length; and during the summer is the principal diversion of the town of Florence. To this day, they talk of the Grand Diavolo, an English horse so called, who, for many years together, won every thing he ran for. In general, they consider more the number of horses than their goodness, and seem perfectly indifferent what they are, provided there be many of them. A Palio of the trifling

value

value of a few crowns, given by the coffee-houses, and run for by the most miserable hacks you ever saw, assembles the same company as a *Palio dei Barberi.**—In short, to see, and to be seen, is the only motive; and the means, whatever they may be, are equally a matter of indifference. Racing, to be sure, is at best a pleasure of very short duration. It has been admirably expressed in few words—Here they come—there they go—by G—D they are gone!

On the twenty-fourth of June, the day of San GIOVANNI, tutelar Saint of Florence, is the first Palio, and principal festival of the year. On the morning preceding is a procession to the Duomo, of the children of the Abbandonati and Innocenti Hospitals of Orphans and Foundlings: such as are in arms, are carried by their nurses; consequently, this part of the procession is rather ludicrous.

In the evening is a Chariot Race, in the Piazza Santa Maria Novella:—an humble imitation of the ancient Circus, both in the manner of running, and number of chariots. The contest is not equal to that of the Olympic Games;—you see no ALEXANDER or ALCIBIADES; nor

* Barberi—race horses, so called, as they came here originally from Tunis.

is

is the victor so much elated with his success, yet he has something more essential, and probably more to his taste, than a branch of laurel,—a present of a few pauls, and a good supper. Though the conquerors, being post-boys, as well as charioteers, may be said, like those of old, to be kept at the public expence, yet have they no pre-eminence at the public festivals; they are celebrated by no Poet; nor have their horses any pyramids erected to eternise their victories.

I should tell you, that their dress is in the antique style, and their colours those of the ancient Circus. They were once dangerous factions—all had their partisans.—I doubt much if any are interested in the success of the Florentine competitors except their own families. They first make the tour of the Circus at a slow pace, following each other according to the posts allotted them; and as the ancients stood up in their chariots, so do they. When arrived at the *Meta*,* the four chariots draw up in a row, and start altogether. He who arrives last, being in motion, is sure to take the lead; and as the two turnings are at right angles, it is an advantage he is not easily deprived of afterwards. An Amphitheatre is erected for the spectators; the very tops of the

* Meta—starting-post of the ancients, so called.

houses

houses are covered with people; and the *coup d'œil* is admirable. In the Piazza del Gran Duca is a fire-work afterwards.

About eight o'clock next morning, being the day of San Giovanni, is the famous procession of Cavalry that carry the Banners of the different provinces belonging to the Sovereignty of Tuscany. They are dressed in different coloured uniforms of ancient times, and observe as much order in their march as can be expected from a parcel of country fellows hired for the day, and mounted on any horses they can procure. Siena is particularly distinguished, and enjoys some privileges; comes last, presents a tribute, and makes a speech. The Car of San Giovanni follows immediately after. Formerly a naked man represented the Saint, but this business getting out of repute, a carved figure supplies his place. It was said of a good-for-nothing fellow:—"*Era tanto Birbone che aveva fatto anche il San Giovanni.*" It was time to leave it off. The procession is closed by the Palio,* and the horses that are to run for it led with great pomp, and attended by several servants of

* Palio—a piece of embroidered velvet, which is to be the prize.

their

their different masters in their best liveries. Ladies must see this procession from a window in the Piazza del Gran Duca; men see it best on foot; nor is there a better place than the steps of the Palazzo Vecchio. It was once a splendid sight when Sovereignty was newer in Tuscany. In these days Princes are more intent how to enjoy the substance of Royalty, than amuse themselves with its trappings. The Grand Duke LEOPOLD has not attended in person for many years.

About six in the evening begins the Corso, and about eight the horses start. A window must be procured, for carriages are not suffered to remain in the street at Florence, though they are at Rome. The Grand Duke's box is open to the Chamberlains of the Court, Foreign Ministers, and such Strangers as are invited. The Giardino of Prince CORSINI, where many of the Nobility assemble, is the best situation. From thence they start, which, in my opinion, is the only part of an Italian race worth seeing; and that only for the strange confusion it occasions.

Having a horse to run, I asked my groom if he thought he would win?—"*Eccelenza si,*" he replied, "*se Dio vuole e Sant' Antonio.*" Whatever may be your opinion of the Saint, *Sant' Antonio del Porco*, I can assure you he is in high

high repute all over Italy, and considered by grooms, coachmen, post-boys, and vetturinos, as equal if not superior to GOD himself.

This race must have been a fine sight in the time of the MEDICI, when the Grand Duke, accompanied by Foreigners, and attended by his whole Court, paraded the streets on horseback. It differs now from another Corso in the number of coaches only.

An illumination at both the Theatres closes the Fête of San GIOVANNI.

LETTER XXIX.

IN countries where diversions are scarce, every trifling circumstance assembles the multitude. Races of hacks, ponies, and jack asses, are not less frequented than those of Newmarket and York. Fairs also, for the same reason, form no inconsiderable part of our summer amusement. Those of Pistoia and Prato (one in July, the other in September), are worth your seeing; as is also that of the Impruneta on the eighteenth of October. It is a pleasant ride of about seven miles, and the country finely variegated. You can only go on horseback, and must return to dine, unless you can make a dinner on roasted chesnuts, the only eatable you are likely to find there. In the Gallery of Florence is a much esteemed Print of this Fair, which once was famous.

The best regulated fête I have seen in Tuscany was that given under the Uffizzi, when the

Grand

Grand Duke was elected Emperor. It lasted without interruption from ten in the morning till the next day. Many ball-rooms were open to those who were well dressed; orchestras were erected in different parts, and the common people danced in the center, having the sky for a canopy. In short, nothing was wanting but gaiety to make it pleasant. The Gentlemen of the Casino, on the same occasion, to their great honor, liberated a hundred and fifty insolvent debtors with a thousand crowns, while the Regency were expending more than double that sum in illuminations, squibs, and crackers.

A sportsman will with difficulty find exercise enough in this country to keep him healthy. Sports of the field are unknown, nor is it usual to ride or walk; you will not wonder, therefore, that their villas and gardens are in a bad style, and the former but little inhabited. I am just returned from taking a solitary and tiresome walk in the old-fashioned Garden of Boboli—where, Art has most cruelly disfigured Nature, by endeavouring to embellish her. Economy is ever averse to expence, without show. A Florentine would think you mad were you to talk of laying out five hundred pounds in levelling ground that it may afterwards look as if Nature had formed it so, and had cost you nothing. I wish, however, they would cover the naked walls with ever-

greens.

greens. One of the first principles in gardening is to shut out every unpleasing object. Planting has another advantage; it gives an appearance of extent necessary to the Garden of Boboli, whose principal feature is magnificence. The Italians are wretched gardeners. Even the French, our nearest neighbours, and greatest imitators, have not an idea of rural beauty.—They lay out their gardens as they paint their faces, and forget that *Artis est celare artem.*

The Cascine I think will not displease you, though even there modern taste is strangely deficient, and poor Neptune and his trident make but an indifferent figure upon a grass-plat! The woods are pleasant, and may put you in mind of your own plantations. When I first saw the great number of hares and pheasants that cross you as you walk, I wished for my gun; and almost longed to be again a sportsman. The house is not a bad one. The Grand Duke, with a kind attention to his subjects not usual in Sovereigns, has allotted some of the rooms for their accommodation. A Traiteur is established, and dinners provided at a short notice. For ten Pauls a head you are not ill served, but must carry your own wine, unless you can be contented with the common wine of the country. If you chuse to eat a Royal pheasant either here or at home, you may by paying for it. They are

dear,

dear, but surely you would not pay a Prince as you pay a poacher. The Cascine is the general rendezvous of the *beau monde*, whether on foot or on horseback; Gentlemen in neat boots and leather breeches; Ladies on side saddles, *á l'Angloise*. I shall never forget my surprise at seeing a Lady in France full drest, astride on a jack ass!

The Grand Duke has many other villas in the neighbourhood of Florence, some of which, an English gentleman in these luxurious times, might not think good enough to live in. Customs and manners have undergone an extraordinary change during this and the last century; and when I visit Eastcheap, once the scene of the midnight revels of HENRY and FALSTAFF, I conclude that the gallants of those days were much less delicate than they are at present. Pratolino, famous for its Water-works, and the Colossal Statue by GIOVANNI BOLOGNA, cost the Grand Duke FRANCESCO a million of crowns. BUONTALENTI was the architect. Seventy thousand crowns are required to repair it. This was the favorite residence of Prince FERDINAND, son of COSIMO the Third, a very accomplished gentleman, who unfortunately died in his father's life-time. In this neighbourhood is Monte Senario, where seven merchants of Florence, desirous to retire entirely from the world, founded

the

the Order *dei Servi*, in the year 1233, on the day of the Assumption. This Convent is finely situated, and a letter to the superior will procure you a tolerable dinner.

Castello and Petraia are close together; and you should see them both. In this neighbourhood is a China manufactory of the GINORI family, where you may agreeably pass a leisure hour.

Poggio Imperiale, and Poggio a Caiano, are the best villas of the Court. The former is close to the town; and the road up to it, made by the widow of COSIMO II., under the direction of GIULIO PARIGI, is admirably constructed. The latter, built by LORENZO DEI MEDICI, was the principal sporting seat of the MEDICI family. Here the Grand Duke FRANCESCO, and BIANCA CAPELLO, were poisoned. History does not determine how this was effected, and the policy of the times seems to have thrown a veil over a transaction so disgraceful to the family of MEDICI. The partisans of that family would make you believe, that BIANCA CAPELLO attempted, by a tart of her own making, to poison her brother-in-law the Cardinal; and that on his refusal, seeing her husband eat of it, she eat of it herself. I cannot say much for the probability of such a story. I am of the opinion of those who suspect the Cardinal. His be-

behaviour to both while alive; his conduct when they were taken ill, not suffering them to receive any assistance,—though no suspicion could possibly fall on his brother, who, at any rate, was innocent;—his ambition, and the dukedom to which he succeeded, leave little doubt, in my breast, where the suspicion ought to fall.

Two posts from Florence, on the road to Pisa, stands Ambrogiana, the favorite villa of that egregious bigot Cosimo III., whose zeal in making Catholics of Turks and Jews, had he lived a little longer, would have ruined his own subjects entirely.—The palace is connected to the convent by a corridore; but the friars, who were Spaniards, have long since been removed to Spain.

The villas of the gentlemen in the neighbourhood of Florence are numerous, but little frequented. The buildings are large, but are neither elegant without, nor convenient within: many of them are well situated, and less obliged to art than nature. Here is neither grass plat, gravel walk, nor shrubbery; and that neatness which gives a polish to the whole, you must not expect to see out of your own country. Even at Poggio a Cajano, where the Grand Duke, in the sporting season, sometimes resides and invites company, our afternoon's walk, for want of a garden, has been on the high road, in the midst

of

of mud and dirt. How comes it, that the cypress, that hated tree, dedicated by the ancients to PLUTO and PROSERPINE, and a constant attendant at their funerals, should be chosen to adorn the modern villas?—Is it as a *memento mori*, to teach that useful lesson—*enjoy the present hour?*—Is it to tell the possessors of these stately mansions, that to-morrow may see them in their coffins, and their heirs revelling and carousing in their stead?—If so, though I cannot admire the tree, for it is no ornament, I cannot but approve the use they make of it.

I asked one of the servants, if they had any game; he told me they had only blackbirds and thrushes, and not many of them.—Italians are bad sportsmen!—A friend of mine, who has a valuable Spanish pointer, was near hanging him the other day, for not bringing a woodcock he had shot; he also expects him to be a good water-dog.—He is doomed, I fear, to be hanged at last.

The Nobles in Tuscany enjoy no privileges of which the Sovereign can hinder them. The exclusive right of sporting on their own estates is no longer allowed them. The cobbler who mends your shoes, if he pays twelve pauls to Government, may shoot your game before your face:—and the Marquis RICCARDI, notwithstanding his wide domains, cannot call one hare

or partridge his own, though they devour his corn, and injure his property.—I see neither justice nor propriety in this proceeding.—My pigeons are permitted to range over my neighbours' fields, where they do an infinite deal of mischief; while my partridges are not safe in my own, where they injure no one but myself.—One may conclude, therefore, that in a few years there will no longer be any game in Tuscany, for the man must be mad who preserves it on terms so disadvantageous to himself. Your old gouty friend R——, who can neither shoot nor hunt; and with whom I have never been able to agree on this subject, without doubt will say,—what stuff! what a fuss about nothing!—If he considers game as a delicacy for the table only, it is, to be sure, of little consequence, for man might live as well without it: but is health nothing? amusement nothing? Considered in this light, whatever be that gentleman's opinion, sports of the field, properly and prudently followed, are most certainly of service both to the mind and body. In England, though we *do* possess an exclusive right on our own lands, as far as relates to the advantages of game, we pay dearly for it,—*a sum not less than the whole yearly produce:* for instance, few estates make more than two and a half per cent.; the interest of money is at five: if, therefore, a gentleman

whose landed property amounts to five thousand pounds a year, were to sell it, and place the money on mortgage, he would exactly double his income, and have just as good security on another man's estate as on his own: add to this account, the great expence to which gentlemen are put in preserving their game, and you will allow that it is very unfair in those who intrude and destroy it. It is thought that our Courts of Justice are not friendly to the game laws.—I cannot think it good policy, since, by such conduct, they lessen the value of landed property. In this country, we suffer from a total want of exercise and employment. A villa in England on a public road is detestable; the road itself is considered as a nuisance:—here, it is our only amusement; the company are constantly on the look out for travellers; a courier discovered, is like a fox found, interests the company as much, and, for want of other matter, is a subject of discourse for many hours afterwards.

Lady Orford's Villa at Fiesole would be delightful could you get to it in a coach. If beautiful and extensive views please you, you should also see La Torre del Gallo and La Parita.

Several hotels are kept at Florence for the accommodation of strangers. A private lodging is most economical. House rent is cheap, but

inns

inns are always dear; and you may hire a palace by the year for less than an indifferent apartment in an hotel will cost you. If you like quiet, inquire who are your neighbours. I have some noisy tradesmen near me, that the Sybarites would not have permitted in their city,—and some cocks in a yard adjoining which those gentlemen would have soon got rid of.—I am no Sybarite; but had I been acquainted with this inconvenience, I would not have established myself in so troublesome a neighbourhood. A lodging may be had for eight or ten sequins a month. Pensions are to be had as low as eight crowns a month:* and at an hotel in the Borgo ogni Santi, a single man is lodged and boarded at five pauls a day. A coach is ten pauls, and the coachman three. You pay by the month twelve sequins, and give the coachman four. A *Lacquais de Place* has four pauls a day; but, if you hire a servant by the month, six crowns is the highest price; you clothe him, and he provides for himself. Some find victuals, and allow their servants nine pauls for bread, and the same for wine; they are then well paid with a sequin a month salary, and you may exceed it a few pauls without being extravagant.—If you

* Private houses, where you are lodged and boarded.

have any difficulty, consult your banker; if he is an honest man, he will procure you all you want at the price he pays himself.

The spring and autumn are the pleasantest seasons to be at Florence.—Delightful seasons in every country, but unfortunately too short in this.

LETTER XXX.

SHOULD you be at Florence in the summer, visit Vallombrosa, one of the greatest natural curiosities in Tuscany, though MILTON only mentions an ordinary circumstance, that of the fall of the leaves in autumn. The distance, which they call eighteen miles, may be somewhat more, and is a journey of at least five hours. Send on saddle horses to Pont a Sieve, and go thither in your carriage. From thence are two roads; the best, though perhaps the longest, is by Pelago:* I went the other, and am not sorry to have thus seen both. You procure a Guide at Pont a Sieve, who attends on foot: let him carry oats for your horses, the Convent provid-

* To Pelago, you may go in your carriage, and have then only five miles to the Convent. At the Mill, ladies, recommended to the Padre Abate, may be accommodated.

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ing only hay; and it may be necessary to inform you, that they keep early hours, dine at twelve, and shut their gates soon after sun-set: that fish is scarce upon the Apennines; and that you had better not visit the good Friars on a maigre day: that to be received with distinction, you must procure a letter to the Superior,* though travellers of all ranks, known or unknown, are received with hospitality. If you are unable to ride, or too lazy to walk, you must not undertake a journey that admits not of a carriage of any kind; and, at any rate, must provide yourself with that patience and resignation which bad roads usually require.—You must not think, my good Sir, to saunter along, with a loose rein, as over the green in Hyde Park; or to gallop, standing on your stirrups, as on the Newmarket Downs:—every step requires caution, and is, literally, *up-hill work*;—it will repay your labour. At Paterna, a territory belonging to the Convent, rough as the rest, but polished by industry, you may take repose, should you require it. Here you will see a barren soil rendered fertile by dint of cultivation; and sloping

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* The title of the Superior at Vall'Ombrosa, is *Padre Abbate*. Before you leave Florence, you should procure letters to the Convents you mean to visit.

vine-

vineyards, that gratefully produce better wine than richer land can boast. Farm-houses scattered here and there, as if placed by art to embellish a savage scene,—and inhabitants, whose ruddy looks bespeak the pure air they breathe. You will be astonished, the whole way, at the boldness of the scenery, and grandeur of the objects:—the woods—the cascades —the rocks—the precipices,—and not least, at the mountain itself, which looks proudly down on all that surrounds it!—The very mountains I had before looked up to with admiration, were dwindled away to nothing,—and I could not help exclaiming—"Where is now your wonted pre-eminence!"—A forest of chesnuts leads you to a forest of firs, and you at length arrive at the Convent of Vallombrosa, situated on a delightful lawn, inclosed in an amphitheatre of wood.

San Giovanni Gualberto, born at Florence in the year 985, of the noble family of Bisdomini, founded the Convent of Vallombrosa. The circumstance that occasioned it was sudden and extraordinary. His only brother Ugone had been assassinated. Giovanni accidentally meeting the murderer shortly after, and drawing his sword to revenge the death of a relation he dearly loved, the repentant sinner, embracing his knees, begged for mercy in the name of him who suffered for us on the Cross,

Jesus

JESUS CHRIST our Saviour.—It was Good Friday.—GIOVANNI, struck with the circumstance, stopped his hand, and considering for a moment his prostrate enemy, suppliant and defenceless, raised him from the earth, embraced him, and forgave him:—"*Go,*" said he, "*in peace; and may that God who on this day suffered for us on the Cross, and for whose sake I now pardon you, ratify our reconciliation in Heaven for ever more!*"— Greatly agitated by so affecting a scene, he entered the church of Saint MINIATO, belonging to the Cluniacenzi Friars,* and while he prayed, the crucifix at which he kneeled, seemed to assume a pleasing aspect, and give signs of approbation. Sensibly struck by a miracle which he readily believed, from that instant he determined to quit a world that had seduced him from the paths of virtue, had flattered his vanities, encouraged his passions, and had rendered him dissatisfied with himself.—The Friars, who had just lost their Superior, viewed with admiration the new-made Saint, and would gladly have placed him at the head of their Order;—but the Order was too relaxed in its

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* Cluniacenzi Friars are also called Benedictines, that Order having been first received at Monte Casino, where San BENEDETTO at that time resided.

disci-

discipline to satisfy his rigid intentions, and he preferred a spot better suited to the gloomy habit of his soul. He sought retirement, and founded a Convent of Benedictines in the midst of woods, on the top of the Apennines, inhabited by wolves and bears.—Such was the state of the Convent of Vallombrosa when San Giovanni Gualberto founded it: it is now become one of the pleasantest spots in Tuscany.

The building is commodious. A College is annexed to the Convent, and boys are received from twelve till eighteen years of age, at the easy rate of thirty-six crowns a year, every expence included; and are instructed in reading, writing, and the Latin tongue. Four months of the year is a perpetual spring; the rest is winter. The air, though sharp, is remarkably healthy, and the good Friars, who have plenty of wood, and are well supplied with all the necessaries of life, are not unacquainted with some of its luxuries.* Strangers are hospitably received, and may be surprised to find a Library, some excellent Pictures, and a Cabinet of Curiosities at the top of the Apennines. John Hugford, an Englishman, Friar of this Convent, was the inventor

* They are well supplied with ice in summer.

of

of the *Scagliola.** It is curious to see the beginning and progress of an art which has since been brought to the highest perfection. To this gentleman Tuscany is also obliged for the introduction of potatoes, a plant that is particularly useful when bread is scarce, and for that reason cannot be too much encouraged.

Among the petrifactions found in the vale beneath (the Val' d'Arno), are bones of elephants of various sizes, old and young. The horn of the Bonassus, or wild bull, is curious, as it is now unknown; and the jaw-bone of another frugiferous animal, of which we have no account whatever. You will see excellent specimens of Lumachelle, and some Corni Ammoni of considerable size.

At the Paradisino is an admirable Picture of Andrea del Sarto, painted the year before he died. There is also a Portrait of Gualberto, with an inscription referring to the event that occasioned his conversion:

Diligite
Inimicos vestros
Benefacite his
Qui oderunt vos.

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* John Hugford died in the year 1771. If not the inventor, to him, however, it owes its perfection. The Scag-

This little building is admirably situated, and from the window, on a clear day, you may distinguish the town of Florence.

Without the walls of the Convent are the lawns of an English park, fed with sheep, and surrounded by woods, cascades, and mountains, that set art at defiance!—that a BROWN might admire, but could not imitate. The Convent itself is inclosed in a forest of firs, the background of which is covered with beech to the mountain's top. Of the fir,* a certain quantity is cut every year for sale, and sent to Leghorn for ship-building, but the carriage is attended with so much expence that the Friars nett only one third of the value. As soon as the trees are cut down, the ground is dug, and sowed with rye; wheat will not grow there. The first year's produce is extraordinary, not less than twenty sacks for one!—The second about fifteen.—The third is seldom more than ten. A young fir is then planted under the shelter of the

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Scagliola is a composition of the Specchio d'Asino found in this neighbourhood. It is baked, then reduced to a powder and formed into a paste, which is afterwards colored and polished.

* The Silver Fir, a harder and better wood than either the Scotch or Spruce.

old

old root, which, in the course of five or six years, moulders away, and the young tree supplies its place. In the intervals they cut hay for their cattle, as long as any grass will grow; that is, till the growth of the trees prevents it; and, at the end of a hundred years, the same ground again undergoes the same cultivation. I should tell you that of rye mixed with wheat they make bread, which, seven months in the year (from the end of November to the end of June), is given to the poor; a loaf every morning to every person who comes, man, woman, or child. They cheat the good Friars sometimes by coming first dressed as men, and afterwards as women. They have been known to bring children in their arms, which have proved children of straw only; and sometimes a cat, swaddled up like a newborn infant. The Padre Abate was lately, however, a match for them. Seeing a boy pass the lawn with a loaf in his hand, whom he suspected to be a girl, he halloed out of the window,—"*What is your name, my girl?*"—"ROSE, *at your service, Sir.*"

You have done but half when you have done with the Convent. The most picturesque views are from the Masso del Diavolo, and the lawn opposite. The best still remains, if your courage be equal to it. On foot it is fatiguing, on horseback alarming. The road is bad, steep,

and

and slippery; the whole circuit of the mountain takes about three hours, but you will not repent your trouble. You will be delighted with the verdure of the plain: it is mowed every year, and fed afterwards with sheep. Here the Friars pass a merry day at the time of hay-making, and dine among the hay cocks. Within the borders of the wood are reservoirs of ice. A deep hole is dug, the snow of the plain is collected together, made up into a mount, and then covered with turf. Thus defended from the air, it will last a long while, unless melted by the rains, and from thence Florence is supplied when their ice fails.* In this wood FARENHEIT'S thermometer fell to fifty-six degrees, though it stood as constantly at sixty-eight at the Convent, as at eighty at Florence. Which ever way you turn your eyes, the view will both please and astonish you. If you like a distant view, you have Alvernia, Camaldoli, and Florence: the mountains of the Romagna, Radicofani, and Modena: and, if the day be clear, the sea at Leghorn. The nearer view is delightful. The Val' d'Arno is beautifully variegated; and a savage scene on one side is finely contrasted on the other by lawns in the

* The ice with which Florence is supplied, brings in to the Convent five hundred crowns a year.

midst

midst of woods, and an outline formed by nature with beech, feathered to the ground, extending as far as the eye can reach, and rising majestically one above the other to the very summit of the mountain.* In short, it is unpardonable to pass a summer at Florence, and not make a visit to Vallombrosa.

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* The Beech of the Mountain are never cut. They are left as a defence to the Convent and the country belonging to it.

LETTER XXXI.

IF you have a taste for wild and romantic scenes, and are not easily intimidated by difficulties; if you are master of your time, and the season of the year be propitious; stop not short at Vallombrosa, but pursue your journey to the other Convents on the Apennines.* I will conclude all this, and send you a few hints useful, if you observe them. The first requisite is a good horse: he should be sure-footed, well shod, and turned up behind; the saddle should be well fitted to his back, and will require both crupper and breastplate. Give him plenty of corn, little hay, and, when travelling, let his water be constantly warmed: for want of that precaution, I had nearly lost a favorite horse

* July and August are the best months, though September, if it be not rainy, is not too late.

at the Alvernia. The water of the Apennines is cold in the extreme; he was taken with a chill, and, I fancy, nothing saved him but the quantity of hot wine and spices I poured down his throat.

The journey to the Alvernia, though short, employs the whole day: though only twenty miles, you may reckon ten hours; and must content yourself, brother fox-hunter, to go at the easy rate of two miles an hour. When you leave the woods of Vallombrosa, you descend a barren mountain; nor do you see house or tree for several miles together. At Monte Minaio the face of the country changes. You may now fancy yourself in Savoy. Here poverty and industry unite, and cultivation extends itself to the very top of the mountain. The road, though rough, is not unpleasant. Chesnut groves shelter you from the sun; while cascades, rocks, and precipices, diversify a rude scenery, more sublime than beautiful, and more in the style of SALVATOR, than of CLAUDE. At Strada we baited our horses;—I should have said, we dined—if what we met with there had merited the name of a dinner. There our horses fared better than ourselves, and, considering the fatigue they had to undergo, the preference was not ill placed. At Borgo alla Collina is the body of CHRISTOPHER LANDINI, commentator

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of DANTE, a man of great learning: they tell you, he has lain uncorrupted upwards of three hundred years.—Had it been the body of DANTE himself, I should not have gone a mile out of my way to see it,—so little do I value the body of any man when once the soul is out of it. The country from hence is finely cultivated to the foot of the barren mountain, on the top of which stands the Convent of Alvernia.

Alvernia was originally the hermitage of Saint FRANCESCO. You are shewn his cell; the cavern in the rock where he reposed and meditated; the spot on which he received the sacred wounds that were inflicted on our SAVIOUR; and are told many wonderful stories, which a heretic, though not expected to believe, may read at the trifling expence of half a paul, in a book sold at the gate of the Convent.*

Fancy cannot conceive a more romantic appearance than that of the Convent of Alvernia,—more remarkable without, more curious within, or more deserving the notice of a traveller. Among other particularities, it is built on a rock, is inaccessible on three sides, and, like another Gibraltar, seems to bid defiance even to time itself.—From the sacrilegious hand of rapine, it

* Founded by San FRANCESCO, in 1213.

has still a better security than its strength—*its poverty*.

This Order of Franciscans consists of a Padre Guardiano, and about fifty Friars, who, in dress and customs, except that they wear no beard, are not unlike the Capuchins;—are equally poor, equally rigid, and, like them, live by charity.

I had heard much of the discipline which these Monks inflict on themselves, and found it more serious than I imagined. The instrument of flagellation is composed of several bits of flat iron, on separate swivels, fastened to a cord, with which they scourge their naked shoulders or posteriors, and frequently till the blood runs. One of them, with whom I had made an acquaintance, honestly told me, he preferred the latter, being a part less sensible of pain.—On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, after the first Coro, the lights are put out,—they then chastise themselves to their liking; more or less, according to the fervency of their devotion, or rebellion of the flesh.

I saw four novices take the habit.—Never was a toilette sooner made.—It is to be wished they may as readily strip themselves of their worldly passions, and as easily put on the armour of grace.—Each received a kiss from the Friars, and they were then exhorted by the master of

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the novices, to bid an eternal adieu to the world! —Parents, friends, acquaintance, you will never see again! and that nothing worldly may remain, as you lately changed your habit, change now your names!—you who were called NICOLAS, be now called LORENZO, &c.—The ceremony was really affecting: but I comforted myself with thinking, that a year's probation is always allowed; and if during that time the body should be found unable, or the mind unwilling, to endure the watchings, fastings, and penance, the Order enjoins, they may return to us again. By a late order of the Grand Duke PETER LEOPOLD, no Friar can be received till eighteen years of age, nor take the habit till he is twenty-four. PETER the Czar did better: he ordered that no person in his dominions should adopt the monastic life till fifty years of age—a time when women, at least, may embrace it without prejudice to posterity.

The immense rock on which the Convent stands, and the beautiful beech that grow on its summit, you will see with astonishment. If you admire relics, they will shew you a part of the Crosier of Saint THOMAS A' BECKET. Fine pictures are seldom to be found in a Convent of Capuchins; you must content yourself with some curious specimens in Terra della Robbia. I was delighted with the organ: it is not, to be

sure, the organ of Harlem; but infinitely better than you could expect to meet with on the top of the Apennines. There is something solemn in the sound of the organ that is not ill suited to devotion; but when I hear the squeaking fiddle, so commonly used in Catholic churches, I fancy myself in a less sacred place, and expect at every instant to hear some tune or other little suited to the solemnity of the occasion. The gardens of the Friars are chiefly appropriated to the growth of tobacco.

From the height above the Convent, which is three thousand nine hundred feet higher than the Duomo at Florence, you see the Adriatic, but the view of the Mediterranean is obstructed by the mountain of Vallombrosa. As you ascend, (you must go on foot), you see towards the south, about sixteen miles distant, the city of San Sepolcro; from the Chapel on the top of the mountain, you see the *Sassi di Simone* at the extremity of the Tuscan State, remarkable for their size and the excellent pasture that surrounds them. Nearly on the same line, but further distant, is the mountain of the famous Republic of San Marino; and under you, at the distance of about five miles, is the source of the Tiber. It is a strange mistake to fancy the sources of the Arno and the Tiber are close together. They are not less than twenty miles

apart,

apart, and it is a doubt whether they can properly be said to belong to the same mountain the Falterona, highest of the Tuscan Apennines, and from whose summit on a clear day you see two seas—the Adriatic and the Mediterranean. This is not the only instance in which the map of Italy is erroneous.

On the summit of this mountain, in the month of August, at five in the evening, the glass was at fifty-two, and the wind high and cold. It brought to my mind Ponte a Sieve, where I had dined a few days before, and where the glass was at eighty-eight:—a trifling difference of thirty-six degrees. The mountain is covered with wood, chiefly beech and firs. In this walk you will see rocks that will astonish you; most of them split asunder, the fragments standing perpendicular, several feet distant one from the other. It may be necessary to remark that the rock of Alvernia is all Macigno, a stone which never cracks of itself, having no veins. Tradition tells us this strange event happened by an earthquake at the death of CHRIST;—no unnatural conjecture in a Christian country, since it must have been a horrible moment that occasioned it.

Primitive mountains, such as the Alps, are of granite. The Apennines are also of granite at the bottom, but on the top you find a chalky sub-

substance, such as is usually occasioned by the settlement of water. Shells are found as high as two thousand two hundred toises, but no higher: —snow lies at one thousand four hundred.

The air at the Alvernia is fresh, even in the midst of summer. FARENHEIT's thermometer in the grove on a very hot day, at twelve at noon, was only at sixty-two degrees; nor was a fire in the evening anywise uncomfortable. At Florence I had only a sheet to cover me, and frequently found that too much; here I was glad of two counterpanes; in short, the same covering as at Florence in the depth of winter. The good Friars receive you with great hospitality; give you honestly to understand that they are poor, and in return for their sincerity, expect you to leave a sequin or two for the trouble and expence you occasion. The mutton is not bad, the bread and goats milk excellent, and the air so pure, that I do not recollect ever to have enjoyed such good spirits as on the mountain of Alvernia.

LETTER XXXII.

THE Camaldoli is twelve miles distant from Alvernia. The roads are such as both you and your horse are by this time accustomed to, and will fear no longer. This Convent was founded by San ROMOALDO, in 1012. He was second to his father, who killing his antagonist in a duel, it affected him so much that he retired from the world. The origin of the two Convents of the Camaldoli and Vallombrosa have a certain similitude that is not a little extraordinary. The Convent is admirably situated for a monastic life, being encircled by woods, encompassed by mountains, and, in a manner, shut out from the rest of the world.—It was this, probably, which made a Frenchman, who came the other day to visit this place, say, with some humor, that were he to choose his future residence, it should be either *Paris*, *London*, or the *Camaldoli*:—and here I think, in a sulky

sulky mood, disgusted with the world and the world's ways, a man might soon learn to forget those by whom he thinks himself forgotten. The Order, which is uncommonly severe, consists of a Padre Maggiore, and about thirty Friars. They never eat flesh, and nine hours out of the twenty-four are spent in prayer. At one o'clock after midnight, that hour of repose to all beside, while you and I, my good friend, are stretching our tired or lazy limbs on beds of down, these Friars, though the wind whistles, and the snow falls, leave their hard mattresses, and, ready dressed,* assemble in the distant choir† to say their prayers,—a ceremony with which, I must confess, I should, at that hour, not without difficulty comply. Their manner of living is not less exceptionable. A broth made of greens only; half a pound of fish, or, in lieu of that, for it is not always to be procured on the Apennines, three eggs boiled in the shell; a piece of cheese; a sufficiency of bread; a few apples; and a small portion of

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* They sleep constantly in their clothes.

† The Chapel is at some distance from their cells, and when the snow is deep, a road is made for them to pass.

wine, is their daily allowance.* This would also have its difficulties. Yet, severe as such mortification must appear, on every Friday they exceed it; bread and water, and a little fruit, is then their only sustenance. Their manners are not less austere. They are not corrupted by communication. They are not only far removed from the world, but are even separated from one another. Each has his own cell, his study, his chapel, and his garden; dines alone; nor, on three days in the week, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, are they permitted to speak to each other when they meet. They can only walk as far as the Crosses without leave; and only once a month do they dine together in the refrectory. They shave their heads, and let their beards grow. They change their habits once a month; while those of the Alvernia never change theirs but once in three years, when they put on new. Though we naturally feel some compassion for these Friars, who live in one continual round of mortification and penance; yet I could plainly perceive some

* A piece of cheese is delivered to each Friar every Sunday to last the whole week. The quantity of bread is not limited; when they want more, they put a piece out of their window as a signal.

among

among them who feel not less compassion for us. They think us triflers at the best.—What worldly pursuit can appear otherwise to those whose sole thoughts are on a future state and immortality!—It is like an instant of time, compared with millions of years; or poor threescore years and ten, to all eternity.

At the Convent are some pictures by GEORGE VASARI; and a copy of San ROMOALDO's Vision, the original of which, by ANDREA SACCHI, is esteemed one of the best pictures in Rome.* The Chapel is elegant, and in a gayer style than suits the solemnity of the Camaldoli; it would make a better ball-room. The view from the Sant' Eremo is fine; there you may read that excellent injunction, "*do as you would be done by,*"—though the inscription might be more necessary over a palace. Hither that mad fellow BENVENUTO CELLINI, better sculptor than courtier, came on a pilgrimage to thank GOD for the kind promises he had received from his Sovereign:—had he waited till they had been effected, he might have saved himself

* He dreamt that he saw a ladder which reached up to Heaven, and the Friars who mounted were all drest in white: upon which he founded the Order Camaldolese. He himself had been a Benedictine, and clothed in black.

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the trouble of the journey. You are shewn a Sleeping Cupid by MICHAEL ANGELO CARAVAGGIO: they have hid his wings, not thinking the character suited to the place. They also shew you their dresses;—their uniforms, brother soldier, of which they have a vast variety, and all infinitely more gaudy than ours. I confess I was not a little disgusted at such mistaken finery, and thought it to the full as much out of character with the place, as the wings of any sleeping Cupid whatsoever.

The firs that surround the Convent are of an uncommon size, and were they near a sea-port, would be very valuable. The climate, though about a couple of degrees warmer than at the Alvernia, is immoderately cold; and the Friars keep constant fires in their cells all the year round. I observed a water-mill to saw their timber on a very simple principle; and I was much concerned to see a trout stream, which formerly supplied the Convent, without a single fish remaining. When the Grand Duke took off the banditi,* making all game and fish free to every one, except his own; he might surely

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* Banditi—a place so called, no one being permitted to sport there.

have excepted the fish of the Convents. It is unjust to deprive those of the necessaries of life who, by their profession, are obliged to abstain from its luxuries; and I know no better privilege despotism enjoys, than that of the partial good it is at liberty to confer.

To judge by the ages of the Friars, one would not think their manner of life unhealthy. In all these Convents are many of an advanced age. If it be strictly true, that those who observe the greatest continence, live the longest, those gentlemen, one might think, should live for ever. I know no particular manner of living that can be given as a certain rule to obtain old age. It has been observed by some, that longevity does not depend on original strength of body, but on good stamina in small bodies of a thin habit. They tell you, that PARR, JENKINS, the Countess of DESMOND, and ANNE BISHOP, were little more than five feet high; and that HESBELOT was not so much. We are told, that not a son died a natural death before his father for near three thousand years after the creation; but the course of nature was still observed, and he that was born first, died first. Great towns are the destruction of mankind. Air already breathed, is always pernicious. A third part of all that are born in populous cities, die under seven years old; and the greatest part of those

that

that remain are between fifteen and thirty-five. Petersburgh is said to be the only great city where the number of births exceed the burials. I have seen old people of all descriptions; but I believe the quality most essentially necessary, is a contented mind. One disorder, however, these Friars are subject to—*ruptures;* partly owing to the food they eat, particularly the quantity of oil; and partly to their standing so long in an upright posture: that the latter is, in some measure, the occasion, cannot be doubted, since the lay brothers, who observe the same diet, are afflicted in a much less degree.

From the Camaldoli to Prato Vecchio are six miles, and may require about three hours. Your Guide will probably shew you what is generally thought a volcano; it has been extinct about two years, and was only a stratum of coal that took fire accidentally, and continued burning without intermission till the whole was consumed. At Prato Vecchio you must go to the house of some gentleman, nor will it be difficult to obtain a letter at Florence for that purpose, as there is not an inn fit to receive you in the place. From hence to the *Capo d'Arno* is really a serious undertaking; it is called five miles, is at least eight, and you could go thirty sooner on a better road. There are those to whom whatever is difficult, appears impossible:

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I am of a different cast; I think nothing impossible, and therefore find few things difficult.—You will not wonder, then, that I satisfied my curiosity, and arrived at the source of the Arno, tasted of the stream, cold as ice itself (it may be tasted, but should not be drank), while my son cut his name on the rock with the stiletto of the Guide.—You must return from whence you came. Stia, through which you pass, was the birth-place of the famous TANUCCI, Prime Minister at Naples; and the Casentino is said to have been long famous for learned men.

To the Consuma are seven miles, the road hilly and bad. The new road from Ponte a Sieve to the top of the mountain at the Consuma, is a continual ascent for more than ten miles; yet rendered so easy, that, though one thousand four hundred and twenty-five bracci perpendicular above the level of the river, it is scarcely perceptible.* It was the intention of the Grand Duke to continue this road through the Casentino, and to pass the Apennines, either at the Camaldoli or the Alvernia, and from thence descend into the Romagna. Whether the ad-

* Braccio—two English feet, wanting an inch: therefore, one thousand four hundred and twenty-five bracci is somewhat more than half a mile.

vantage

vantage of that desirable communication would have answered the enormous expence, not less than five thousand five hundred crowns for each mile, I cannot pretend to judge; but as the plan is dropped for ever, I fancy if only a tenth part of the fifty-five thousand crowns already expended had been laid out in charitable purposes, and the remainder thrown into the sea, his Royal Highness had rendered a more essential service to his country, than by making a wide and magnificent road to the Consuma for a parcel of mules and jack-asses.

I am returned to Florence highly satisfied with the different merits of the three Convents I have seen, and of the hospitality of the Friars. A traveller who stays no longer at either than to satisfy his curiosity; who admires whatever is grand in nature, and can overlook its deformity, will prefer the Alvernia. The man of the world, who, half-suffocated at Florence, sighs after fresher air, and longs to enjoy the summer's shade, without relinquishing all the comforts of the capital; may pass his time very pleasantly at Vallombrosa.—But if devotion be the motive, he will approach with reverence the sacred mansion of Camaldoli; and if mortification, penance, and retirement, be acceptable to God, he will conclude those poor sequestered Friars in a

surer

surer road to Heaven, than the rich and luxurious Cardinals of Rome.

If you were interested in the fate of the generous GUALBERTO, and are not already tired with Convents and Friars, listen to the story of the unfortunate DE RANCE´. You have heard, without doubt, of the Order of La Trappe; of mortification suited only to wretches disgusted with the world, and severities that might call forth repentance from the most hardened sinner. RETROU, Count de Perche, was the founder of this Convent of Cestercensians, in the year 1214. Though rigid the Order, the discipline was relaxed,—and the good Friars were beginning to doubt whether mortification were necessary to salvation, when the Count de RANCE´, born in the year 1626, a man of the world, ecclesiastic by profession, became Superior of the Convent. The Abbé de RANCE´ was not a bigot from inclination, nor did his situation as head of the Convent, such were the customs of the times, require any peculiar austerity of manners. Nature had bestowed on him a tender heart, and fashion had taught him to indulge his passions. He was an admirer of beauty, and found in the Duchess of MONTBAZON a mistress that gratified every wish.

The pleasures of this world, alas! are not only

only of short duration, but are as inconstant as the April sun.—The enamoured Abbé, in the height of his enjoyment, was unexpectedly called into the country from the arms of the most beloved of women.—An absence like this, of a few days only, was better calculated to increase affection than diminish it;—his mind was solely occupied on pleasures past, and the expectation of those to come.—Returned to Paris, the eager Abbé flew to the Duchess's hotel, and arrived at her apartment, by means of a back stair-case, unperceived by any one. He entered her bed-chamber with more than usual impatience,—and the first object that met his longing eyes, was a surgeon severing the head from a dead body, which a coffin that stood by was too little to contain,—it was the head of the Duchess of Montbazon, who had died of the small-pox during his absence, and of whose illness he had not the smallest notice.—A scene of horror like this is not to be conceived:—the despair of the lover was equal to his astonishment;—and poor De Rance' retired instantly from the world,* and rendered the Order of La Trappe as remarkable for the severity of its discipline, as

* In 1663; he died in 1700.

their Superior was famous for the singularity of his misfortunes.

They live on fruits, vegetables, bread, and water. They sleep in their clothes on a mattress of straw laid on the bare boards. They observe a profound silence when they meet. Their time is chiefly employed in prayer; and, if you believe COMMINGES, when they are not praying, each is employed in digging his own grave.—It has been said of them, that when they quit this world, they do not, like all others, cease to live, but cease to die.

LETTER XXXIII.

THOUGH all my life I have been more in the habit of spending money than of saving it, a lessened income, and a long acquaintance with the Florentines, enable me to give a useful lesson of economy to an extravagant young man like you. Example is better than precept; and the counsel of one who speaks feelingly, and from experience, is better than all the lessons of the schools. I shall tell you then, though you talk of economy in England, that it is only in France and Italy that it is practised, where no man throws away his money on things he does not want. It is a mistake, to fancy that our great incomes are so well employed:—useless state, troublesome magnificence, and unwelcome companions, run away with the greatest part of them; and few of those who squander

thousands upon others, have a hundred pounds at command to lay out as they please upon themselves. Every day Louis XV. went to hunt, forty bottles of wine were carried with him. One day, being dry, he called for a glass of wine: he was told, there was not any. "What," said the King, "*not any!*—I thought you brought out forty bottles."—"Yes, Sire, but they are all emptied." "Another time, then, remember to bring *forty-one*, that I may, at least, have *one for myself.*" Suppose a young man on coming to his estate was to be told, that of the six thousand pounds a year he thought he had to spend, three thousand of it was to be withheld to pay for houses he never saw, servants he did not want, and horses he never rode, would it not appear ridiculous?—Yet how many are ruined by extravagances from which they receive no pleasure or satisfaction!—It is otherwise in France and Italy: the gentlemen in those countries keep nothing that is not of use; buy nothing they do not want; and if they are poor, nothing they can do without. Plato says—"*The man who would be truly rich, should rather contract his desires, than increase his wealth.*" It is provoking to think, though we spend more than double the money they do, that we cannot live so well. Is it that we carry our guineas in our waistcoat pocket, and throw them

them away by handfulls?—or do the tradesmen with whom we deal, when they look us in the face, see ignorance and extravagance written there in capitals? Be it as it may, it is an undoubted fact, that we pay more for every article we buy than any other nation. Whether our pride forbids us to refuse what is offered on account of the price, or our indolence will not suffer us to seek it at a cheaper place, let each individual determine for himself. An Italian gentleman has just shewn me a bill of his coach-maker for thirty-two sequins, which the man insisted was the just price. As it is not his custom to pay a bill without examining its contents, he found it exorbitant, taxed every article, and gave him ten sequins only;—and the rascal went away perfectly satisfied. You would have thought it beneath your dignity to have paid less than he asked: of course, my Italian friend, with one thousand a year, makes as good a figure as you with three. I have sometimes asked tradesmen, why they charge so much more than they will take: they have constantly replied, "*It is the custom of the country.*" This being the case, those who are not acquainted with the custom of the country, and do not know on which of the articles an abatement ought to be made, are sure to be finely imposed upon. It is necessary, therefore, in all bargains

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to have some idea of the real value of the commodity before you ask the price; you will then find every tradesman contented with a trifling advantage, when he plainly perceives he must not expect a greater. This hint, which the avowed roguery of the Italians makes necessary here, may not be unuseful in every other part of the Globe. Where a price is fixed, learn what it is, and pay no more:* where it is not, meet imposition with firmness, and be cheated as little as you can help.—*Sapere aude.*—You are not covetous, be not ashamed to be economical: you are generous, remember that economy is the source of generosity. When you consider the great good you can do with every little saving; the merit it may reward,—the distresses it may relieve,—it becomes a serious duty not to suffer yourself to be cheated out of it.—Do any thing but hoard it; for then it is useless to others, and may become a burthen to yourself.

We have acquired, and I believe not unjustly, a strange character for extravagance all over Europe,—and, unluckily, what, in some of us, may proceed from generosity, is generally attributed to folly, pride, and indolence in all.

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* In coffee-houses, where the price of every thing is fixed, it is safest and best not to appear ignorant of it.

An Italian, the other day, speaking of a countryman of ours, said—*He did not spend his money like an Englishman.* I could not help observing, that he paid him a compliment without intending it; that I knew the Italians thought us all fools in our dealings with them, and that no people upon earth deserved it so much at their hands. Among numberless examples, take the following:—Mr. ——, from the East Indies, more rich than wise, has agreed to pay twenty sequins a month to the famous NARDINI for lessons on the fiddle, though there is not an instance of any one beside himself paying more than three.—An imposition like this degrades the man of talents below the pickpocket.—The lad who ingeniously robs you of your handkerchief to support his parents, is a more respectable character. When I want a master for my children, I first inquire what he usually takes of his countrymen: if it be a sequin a month, I agree with him for somewhat more; if I am afterwards satisfied with his behaviour, I give him two; but had rather he should owe it to my generosity, than my ignorance:—the one is a quality that renders me contented with myself; I am always ashamed of the other. Without some method, no income is sufficient. A Russian Prince, with an estate of sixty thousand pounds a year, is over head and ears in debt, and

says

says he will readily allow four thousand pounds a year to the man who with his income will enable him to live like a gentleman. We are rich only in the proportion our receipts bear to our expenditure. The man who is in debt, is poor, let his income be what it may. You will tell me, perhaps, you had rather be imposed upon than take any trouble to prevent it. I don't know, strictly speaking, that you are at liberty to make the choice. Though you have money to throw away, your neighbour may not, and in that case he becomes a sufferer:—you encourage roguery and extortion, and fix the character of stinginess on those who merit that of discretion. Many generous actions are liable to the same objection. The conduct of your friend ———, who gave up his Colonel's pay to the private men of his regiment, was, in my opinion, among the number; and could not fail to prove a detriment to the service.

If ever you should leave England out of economy, whether you establish yourself in France or in Italy, go first to a poor town, which, generally speaking, is the cheapest: you will there learn the prices of the necessaries of life, and make some progress in economy that will be of use to you ever after. You may there make a figure with little money, and, as you will live as well as your neighbours, will have

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less reason to wish for more. I need not tell you, that, on a plan like this, much will depend on the honesty of your servants. One you must have in whom you can place a confidence, and the difficulty will be where to find him. It is by no means proper he should be an Englishman;—they are by much the worst travelling servants I know;—none are so little attached to their masters, or so much dissatisfied with every thing they meet with out of their own country: besides, they are as easily imposed upon as yourself, and their ideas of expence are always conformable to the extravagance they have been accustomed to.—He must not be a *Lacquais de Place*, for they are all rogues by profession, and in league with every tradesman.—Whatever servant you take, whether he be French, Swiss, German, or Italian, inquire yourself into his character from his master,—and probably, as he can have no interest in deceiving you, he may give a true one. You must not, however, expect him to be the same careful, economical person with you as with one of his own country; you will soon spoil him:—his idea of your riches will soon make him less frugal,—and it will be well if your indolence does not make him a rogue.—Never confide where you are not obliged; nor shew mistrust where you are obliged to confide.—Give good wages, and pay them

them regularly. A gentleman of my acquaintance observes a method in treating his servants somewhat curious.—He begins by giving them as little as possible, fully convinced that the poorer they are, the better they will behave: however, as an encouragement to behave well, after a certain time he raises their wages, but reduces them again, if they cease to deserve it. One lamed his horse, the other day, by riding him hard, though he knew he had lost a shoe: this man was reduced till the horse was cured.—The same horse was frisky the other day, and near throwing him off;—he has been ordered a feed of corn a day less, till he mends his manners.

Let your daily expences, ordinary and extraordinary, be brought in every night, though you pay them only once a week. Buy every thing with ready money. Have no bills; for if you intend to pay, as every honest man ought, you are sure to pay most exorbitantly at last:—besides, it is a temptation to exceed your income. When you purchase with ready money, it is a kind of calculation whether you prefer the commodity or your money; when you pay with words only, you seldom make any calculation at all.—*Il n'y a rien qui ruine comme l'etre sans argent*, says Madame de SEVIGNE': the expression is witty, and the sentiment is just.

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The more you simplify, the less you will be imposed upon. Your tailor's account, for instance, will be more easily understood, if, when you want a new coat, you buy the cloth, and pay for the making:—above all, affect economy, if you have it not. I was told the other day of a great imposition a countryman of ours suffers in his family. The person who informed me of it was one of his own servants; of course, I asked him why he did not prevent it: he replied, "*My master, Sir, does not mind it, then why should I?*" Count —— is in the other extreme: his wife lay at the point of death, and the physician, instead of medicine, had ordered her some chicken-broth. The Count, overwhelmed with grief, asked, "*If there were then no hopes remaining.*"—"*None,*" answered the physician, "*none! nor can she survive many hours.*" "*If you are certain of that Doctor,*" replied the Count, "*tell the cook not to kill the chicken,—I see no reason why I am to lose my wife, and my chicken too.*"

It may be necessary to inform you, that in all bargains, tricking is not looked upon as disgraceful in this country, where every man is as little to be depended upon as a Yorkshire jockey.—It is considered as a trial of skill, and he is looked upon as the cleverest fellow who can cheat

cheat most. As I cannot haggle for trifles, I know I am no match for an Italian. The knowledge of their imposition carries its antidote along with it, and I lay out as little money as I can help in a country where I am to expect no fair dealing.—This an Englishman, who has paid for his experience, may be permitted to say, since one of their own dramatic writers has thought it deserving of public censure.

Whatever you have occasion to order, inquire what it will cost, and make your bargain first. Whatever you have occasion to buy, rather trust your servant, than buy it yourself of the merchant: that your servant will cheat you, is highly probable,—but he will cheat you less, as he expects to cheat you often; and with a little inquiry, you may soon be a match for him. Lord MANSFIELD turned away a coachman for his roguery. Seeing him some time after on a gentleman's coach-box, he had the curiosity to ask by what good fortune he got a place with so bad a character. The man replied, that as the character his Lordship gave recommended him as a good coachman, his master said his roguery was of no consequence, for, being a Yorkshire man himself, he might cheat him if he could.

It cannot be necessary to tell an Englishman not to be scrupulous in trifles, or mean in any thing.

thing. Where you doubt, inquire what others pay, and keep on the handsome side of it. Many of those who squabble for a sixpence, and receive a thousand curses, lay out hundreds in expences which neither contribute to their honor or amusement. The value of one coat, which, for the sake of wearing two or three times, you carry about with you the whole year at no small inconvenience, will make all the difference in the character of a generous man and a covetous one. I must again remind you, that the true *scavoir vivre* is only to be learned in France and Italy. The smallness of their incomes obliges them to look minutely into their affairs, and proves how much may be done with a little if well regulated; while their self-denial in all unnecessary wants, shews the absurdity of squandering money on things that procure little or no satisfaction, at the risk of wanting it for such as are necessary. Their sensible enjoyment of the present hour, would be no unprofitable lesson to many of us, who are either foolishly regretting the time past, or imprudently anticipating the time to come. The gay manner with which they bear misfortunes of consequence, might also teach us not to make ourselves miserable for trifles; and the value they set on trifles, might convince us that all is vanity, and make us both wiser and better men.

It is now time to quit this subject, and tell you, that when we left Florence for Pisa, we were advised to go by water. The Arno was full, and they said would carry us as quickly as the post. You go with the stream, and in a covered boat. In the summer, it may not be unpleasant; but in the rainy season, I had as soon be an egg in a duck's belly. We went post. Those who are heavily laden, must be contented to move slowly; and, though we had but six posts to go, and sat out early in the morning, it was late at night when we arrived at Pisa.

LETTER XXXIV.

THE town of Pisa is situated on an extensive plain; high mountains shelter it from the north and east winds, and render the climate, Naples excepted, the warmest of Italy. It is six posts from Florence, two from Leghorn, and two from Lucca. The river Arno runs through the middle of the town, and at the distance of about five miles empties itself into the sea. The Porto Pisano was once famous, though the exact spot is not at present known. There PUBLIUS SCIPIO disembarked his troops when he met HANNIBAL, who beat him shortly after near the Tesin.

NUMITIANUS RUTILIUS, a Latin Poet of the fifth century, supposes the Pisans to be of Grecian origin, from Pisa a city in Arcadia. In his time Pisa was a peninsula; and the Serchio which is now at the distance of some miles, and empties itself into the sea, then entered the Arno

Arno a little below the town, forming the cone of a pyramid. This author describes very minutely his voyage from Rome by sea, and his description of the town of Pisa, differing so essensentially from its present state, is worth your notice.*

The history of this Republic adds one instance more to the many that have preceded it, of the instability of worldly grandeur. Like other states it had its period :—it rose—it flourished—and it fell. At the siege of Palermo, the Pisan gallies gained great honour against the Saracens. In the thirteenth century the Pisans were masters of Sardinia, Corsica, and Elba ; and at that time were not only superior to every one of their neighbours singly, but a match for them all together. VILLANI tells us that Pisa was attacked at the same time by Florence, Lucca, Siena, Pistoia, Prato, Volterra, Sanguminia, Colle, and Genoa ; and a respectable modern historian speaking of the Greek fire, an invention which he tells us the Romans of the East frequently used with success against their enemies, either to burn their fleets, or annoy their armies, remarks that, " at the end of the eleventh

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* This book is in the Library of the University. NUMITIANUS RUTILIUS wrote in the year 416.

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century, the Pisans, to whom every sea, and every art were familiar, suffered the effects without understanding the composition of the Greek fire." BRANTOME also speaking of Pisa, ranks it among the most flourishing cities of Europe. He says, Paris in France, Milan in Lombardy, Rome in Italy, and Pisa in Tuscany. The Pisans may be proud of such honorable testimonies of their pre-eminence. Pisa stood high in arts and arms, when Florence was an inconsiderable city; the inhabitants at that time are said to have despised the unpolished manners of their present masters, and contemptuously called them their *mountaineers*.

The eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries were the great epoch of Pisan splendor. Her commerce was extensive, and her armies victorious. Freedom, and Industry her usual companion, made this brave people happy; and the Arts, which delight in both, united to render them famous. At this period they began to revive in Italy, and Pisa is justly entitled to the honor of having lent the first hand to raise them. Thus far fortune seems to have favored the Pisans. At length their minds alienated from their country by internal divisions; their numbers diminished by a severe pestilence, and an unsuccessful engagement at sea; the Florentines

deprived them of their liberties, and Leghorn has since robbed them of their commerce. The public edifices of this town, which serve to shew what Pisa once was, when compared with what she now is, afford a melancholy but useful lesson to the Philosopher, and, were it the only one, would sufficiently evince that all is vanity.

The town of Pisa is about five miles in circumference, but being considerably too large for its present inhabitants, what otherwise would lay waste is wisely turned into gardens. Pisa at present contains about fourteen thousand souls, and though a small number for a town, which even in its present state would contain at least forty thousand, is greatly increased since the Court have made it their winter's residence. La Lande tells us it once counted one hundred and fifty thousand. I suppose he means at the end of the eleventh century, at which time their population was at the highest: it was at the lowest in the fifteenth, when some pretend it did not exceed two thousand. Both these accounts seem exagerated. It is however certain that at the death of the Grand Duke Francesco, the total number of inhabitants amounted to eight thousand only.

The climate of Pisa is nearly equal to that of Nice and Naples. Snow is an unusual sight, unless at a distance; and the severities of frost

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are totally unknown. FARENHEIT's thermometer, exposed to the north in the shade during the months of December and January, was never lower at twelve at noon than forty-four degrees. The mid-day sun is too powerful on the Lungarno, even in winter. In the shortest day you can see to read till near five o'clock: and the earth is at least a month forwarder in her productions than in England.

The town is not fortified; is surrounded by an old wall; and two of the gates, those of Florence and Lucca, are opened at any hour of the night. Custom-house officers are constantly upon the watch, and nothing can enter that has not some duty to pay. As I know you have too much good sense to judge of a whole country from the stupidity of one man, I shall relate a ridiculous circumstance that happened to me the other morning at the custom-house. Among a variety of articles received from England, was a parcel of gunpowder: this parcel was delilivered with the rest into the hands of a young fellow, who readily enough opened the others; but when he was told what this contained, he laid it down with as much precipitation as if it had been a firebrand:—it is literally true, that this ancient Republican,—this brave Pisan,—this conqueror of Sardinia, Corsica, &c. &c. &c., was afraid to cut the string with his knife, lest he

should be blown up with the gunpowder.—I wish it had been all gunpowder!

At a place still called the Fortezza, a Governor formerly resided: but the system of government being changed, the Governor is dismissed, and the garrison disbanded. The town is now guarded by a militia, consisting of one hundred and fifty men, sixteen of whom mount guard every day, twelve remain all night, the others return home to their wives.

The principal public buildings are the Duomo, Battistero, Campo Santo, and Torre Pendente. Palaces here are but few. The handsomest, on the outside at least, being of white marble, is that of the Cavalier LANFREDUCCI. It has a motto over the door, *Alla Giornata*, which I have never been able to get a satisfactory account of, not even from the gentleman himself. The houses in general are very indifferent. It is not unusual for the ground-floor to be either a shop or a coffee-house; and the roofs, which hang over into the street, though they afford shelter to those who walk, add little beauty to the edifices. The streets are wide, are well paved, and kept clean by the galley-slaves, who, chained two and two, and accompanied by a soldier, or, to speak more properly, by a man with a firelock on his shoulder, make this their daily exercise.

We have no public gardens. The Lungarno is the general rendezvous of all Pisa, and, for length and breadth, having the river Arno running through the middle of it, is one of the finest streets I know. The middle bridge, which is of marble, is the place of combat at the *Gioco del Ponte*. At the lower bridge, one arch occasionally served as a draw-bridge to let the galleys pass. They were laid up where the Grand Duke now keeps his horses. The size of the stables will give you some idea of their dimensions. They were a hundred *bracci* long (about one hundred and ninety-two English feet), and fourteen wide; had thirty-four oars, five men to each, and carried, soldiers and sailors included, about three hundred men. Near the Leghorn Gate are still to be seen some of the poops: they are of admirable workmanship, and merit your inquiry. This mode of fighting got out of use when ships of war came into the Mediterranean.

Near the town are many pleasant walks. Those on the Argine are most frequented. The usual drive is to San Michele. The Corso is on the Lungarno. Remote antiquity has left nothing for Pisa to boast of.—No remains of either Circus or Theatre, though without doubt, in former times, it was amply supplied with both:

both: nor do I know of one antique statue in the town.

The principal inns are the Donzelle and the Ussero. One is recommended by its situation on the Lungarno; the other is most reasonable and best.

I shall now only add, that were a stranger to enter Pisa at the Porta Nuova, he would see the Duomo, Batistero, Campo Santo, Torre Pendente, and the Hospital:—were he afterwards to drive through the Piazza dei Cavalieri, take the whole length of the Lungarno, and leave the town immediately, he might then fancy it one of the most magnificent, and most populous cities in Italy, and be mistaken in both.

LETTER XXXV.

THE Duomo of Pisa was begun in the year 1064; but whether BUSCHETTI, the architect, was of Pisan or Grecian origin, we are left in doubt; we only know, from an ancient inscription, that he was buried here. The expence of the building was in part defrayed by the spoils taken from the Saracens at the siege of Palermo the preceding year. This ancient Gothic pile, faulty as it may now appear to the nicer eye of modern architecture, without doubt did honor to the eleventh century: at that period, the arts were proud of such an ornament, and the other Cities of Tuscany were glad of such a model. The doors of bronze by GIOVANNI BOLOGNA are deservedly admired. Those by BONANNO, in 1180, were destroyed by fire. The form is a Roman cross. Many of the marble pillars were brought from Greece; others probably were part of the ruins of ancient tem-

temples. They are chiefly of granite, are of various dimensions, and the architect has shewn uncommon skill in the manner of disposing them. The best pictures are by ANDREA DEL SARTO, whose correctness of drawing is always admirable. Saint AGNES is beautiful. A solemn gloom reigns throughout this church; it is its peculiar excellence; let those who criticise it, remember, that it is not a drawing-room.

You are shewn the tomb of the Emperor Henry VII., who was crowned King of Italy at Milan,—Emperor at Rome,—and fought his way from the very foot of the Alps to be poisoned at last by a treacherous and sacrilegious priest at Buonconvento.

The body of San RANIERI, kept in a glass case, is exposed on particular days to the populace, by whom it is held in the highest veneration;—a veneration not undeservedly bestowed, if we may credit what is said of it. The Chevalier TIDI tells us, "Subito che viene scoperto il suo Miracoloso Corpo si vede rasserenarsi o intorbidirsi l'Aria a secondo dei Bisogni di queste Campagne, Miracolo che ogni vivente ne puo far testimonianza perche frequentemente si ne vede l'Effetto." *—I mentioned, the other

* No sooner is his miraculous body uncovered, than you see the weather change either to wet or dry, as it is wanted in

day, this curious assertion to a friend of mine, a Pisan, and expected he would join with me in laughing at it; instead of which he very gravely replied—"*To be sure, Sir, nor can any one doubt it.*"—From that moment I determined not to doubt it in this country at least, whatever I may do in another. On the outside of the church is the Sarcophagus of the Countess BEATRICE, mother of the Countess MATILDA. MELEAGER is there represented in basso relievo—that famous sportsman of antiquity.

The Batistero, begun in the year 1153, is a handsome circular building, where the Pisans are all baptised. It was built by the voluntary subscription of a florin from each family, at a time that Pisa contained not less than thirty-four thousand families. The pulpit of alabaster is by NICCOLO' DA PISA, restorer of sculpture in Italy; an art that is said to have been the last that perished, and the first restored. On one of the pillars you read the name of DIOTISALVI the architect. The walls, like those of the gallery in Saint Paul's, render the lowest whisper intelligible from one end to the other; the usual effect of elliptic ceilings.

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in the adjacent country,—a Miracle to which every living person can bear testimony, as the effect of it is often seen.

The Campo Santo, burial place of the ancient Pisans, was begun in the year 1278, and demonstrates, more than any thing beside, their former grandeur. A large oblong cloister, two hundred and seventeen bracci in length, eight hundred and seventy-two wide, surrounds an extensive burying ground, whose earth, brought from Jerusalem, had once the quality of consuming a dead body in the space of twenty-four hours;—a virtue which they candidly confess it has long lost. This was probably in imitation of the ancient Romans, who, when they no longer burnt the bodies of their dead, put them into a stone coffin of a quality that consumed them presently: in this they differed from the Egyptians, who, the better to preserve theirs, made mummies of them. Many of the Sarcophagi, some of which are of Grecian, others of Roman sculpture, merit your regard; and it is curious to observe the tombs of about four hundred noble families of Pisa, of which four or five only are now remaining. The walls are painted by the first masters of the ancient school. Simone Memmi, of Sienna, celebrated by Petrarch, whose Laura he painted, has represented the miracles of San Ranieri. Giotto, scholar of Cimabue, the History of Job: the two last are both celebrated by Dante. Noah is represented naked, and his daughter holding her hands

hands before her face, and peeping through her fingers;—she is called *La Vergogniosa del Campo Santo*, and is become a proverb for false modesty. The Triumph of Death is painted by ORGAGNI: and three Bodies are shewn in their different stages of corruption, intended, as it is supposed, to illustrate the effect the earth of the Campo Santo then had upon the human frame. In another part, Death is represented flying from the poor, who court his embrace, to the *bons vivants*, who neither desire nor expect him. SOLOMON is, ridiculously enough, placed between Heaven and Hell; and stands like the prompter of the Italian theatre, between the stage and the pit:—the Painter thus expressing his doubts to which place he most properly belongs. A Colonna Miliaria, and a Decree of the Senate of Pisa, upon the death of L. and C. CÆSAR, sons of AUGUSTUS, ordering the inhabitants to wear mourning for a year, and refrain from all public diversions, are also worthy of remark.—Here contemplation indulges a pleasing melancholy on the past; and thus prepares the mind for that which is to come, and is inevitable. At the close of a summer's day, what an interesting walk does this Cloister afford to the philosopher!—What a moment for reflection on the vanities of the world amid the tombs of a people once so famous, now no more!

more!—It may teach charity to the wealthy,—patience to the afflicted,—and may afford to the miserable this comfort at least, that a few years will assuredly put an end to all their sufferings.

There is not a people but entertain for the tombs of their ancestors respect and veneration, except the Tuscans.

The ancients, who were ever anxious to give the last kiss, and close with their own hands the mouth and eyes of their friends and relations, continued their regard for their bodies even after their decease, and visited their tombs. HOMER makes the spirit of PATROCLUS appear to his friend, to intercede that their bones may lay in the same tomb; and how amiable is AGGRIPPINA weeping over the ashes of her GERMANICUS. Even OVID, in the midst of his sufferings in a distant country, is not unmindful of his ashes; and desires they may be carried to the tomb of his ancestors. The tombs of the three hundred Spartans were of more service to Greece than any victory she ever gained. In ancient Rome the FABIUS' and the SCIPIOS' were thus encouraged, as SALLUST observes, to actions of valor by the valor of their ancestors. The Funeral Oration, it is true, is needless now; for what can you say but that he lived, and that he died; yet, after a life of seventy years are we to be entirely forgotten,—not even a stone to tell that we

ever

ever existed! Be it pride, be it weakness, be it what it may, I am sorry for it. That the people of this country are no longer to sleep with their fathers, but are to be buried like dogs, I own concerns me; but I console myself with thinking that of all their hardships it is what they will feel the least. Though I disapprove the Tuscan manner of getting rid of the dead, I am no friend to costly funerals; they are the height of absurdity. NERO, who murdered his wife POPPEA, is said to have consumed more cinnamon and cassia at her funeral than the country from which it was imported produced in a whole year!

The Torre Pendente, built in 1174 by GUGLIELMO TEDESCO, and BONANNO PISANO is the greatest curiosity in Pisa. The form is cilindrical: the height one hundred and sixty-eight feet, and its inclination out of the perpendicular not less than thirteen. It consists of eight stories surrounded by pillars, and from the top, which serves as a belfry, you have a delightful view of Pisa, the Baths, Leghorn, and the Sea. Various are the opinions concerning this extraordinary building. Some think it was designedly built as it now is; others, that accident occasioned it. The most probable conjecture, in my opinion is, that after three stories were finished the foundation gave way, and that rather than destroy what they had so far advanced,

vanced, the whimsical idea suggested itself of continuing the building, and correcting its defects. It is evident that each story after the third inclines less and less. The last was added afterwards, so late as the middle of the fourteenth century. This is not the only building in Pisa that is out of its perpendicular. The Specola inclines visibly, and many others.

It was from this Tower that the famous GALILEO, when Professor at the University, made his Philosophical experiments, and found, in opposition to the received opinion of ARISTOTLE, that the velocity in the fall of bodies depends more on their surface than their weight. Further experiments have since confirmed the opinion of GALILEO, and have proved that all bodies, let their weight be what it may, fall with an equal velocity in an air-pump.—Remove the resistance of the air, and all fall alike;—a piece of lead not quicker than a feather.

Whether this wonderful building inclines by accident or design, we are at least certain that it is one hundred and sixty-eight feet in height, and not less than thirteen feet out of its perpendicular:—that it threatens instant ruin to the houses under it, and has already stood upwards of six centuries. All these edifices receive great advantage from their situation, nor do I think four such interesting pieces of architecture are

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to be found together in any other part of the world.

See the Hospital, if you have not already seen that of Florence. The inscription, *Providentia Leopoldi Patris Pauperum*, is a poor imitation of *Patris Patriæ*. A boy who has been bitten by a mad dog is just returned thither from visiting Saint DONINO, near Volterra, a worthy Gentleman, who has left behind him a crooked nail, which, heated in the fire and applied to the part, is said to prevent every bad effect from this terrible malady. The wound looks well, and the boy makes light of it:—whatever faith can do I perceive is not wanting. Could I be sure the dog was mad, I might have some faith in the miracle, for I can have none in the remedy; and shall certainly add, if ever I am in want, *Saint Ormskirk*, or *Saint Cobb*, lest the crooked nail of an Italian Saint should have no effect on the blood of a Heretic.

LETTER XXXVI.

THE Caravanna is the Palace where the Knights of Saint STEFANO reside, an Order instituted by COSIMO I. in commemoration of the two victories he gained at Montemurlo, and Scannagallo, both on Saint STEPHEN's Day. The third of September, if I mistake not, was not less remarkable in the life of CROMWELL. It was both fortunate and fatal to him. On that day he won the two famous battles of Dunbar and Worcester; and on that day he died. The Knights of Saint STEPHANO, like those of Malta, were first intended to defend their own coast against the Infidels; like them must prove their Nobility, but are not obliged to celibacy, and their vow of chastity is but indifferently kept. Formerly they served three years on board the galleys of the State against the enemies of their religion; they now reside three years in the Caravanna at Pisa, and are afterwards

wards promoted, according to seniority, to the different Commanderies of the Order. I am told that each Knight is obliged by the statutes to say one hundred Pater Nosters, and as many Ave Marias every day; an omission, that, were the more necessary ordinances more strictly observed, might easily be forgiven.

The Caravan in its present state is neither more nor less than a college for the education of young men of family, of which, the Grand Prior, who constantly resides among them, may be considered as the head. The Knights are nominated by the Grand Duke, nor is the number fixed. They cannot sleep out of the Caravan without leave, during their eight month's residence, nor appear in the town without their uniform. Each at his entrance must be in possession of three hundred crowns a year; which, little as it is, seems to be the specific sum thought necessary by the Sovereign to maintain the dignity of Nobility in Tuscany.

Under proper regulations the Caravan might become an excellent place of education, but it cannot be denied that thirty young men (which is the number at present) of different ages, are not easily managed. Too much severity is ill-brooked at five and twenty; and too much lenity ill-suited to seventeen. A peevish disposition, that notices every trifle, creates dis-

gust and provokes opposition; while an easy disposition, which is offended at nothing, soon loses its authority. The happy medium between the two extremes, so rarely to be met with, is still wanting to render this establishment useful. All Italy might then be benefited by such a place of study, and the Grand Duke made acquainted with the capacity of his subjects before he employed them:—but for this purpose, other regulations are necessary than those at present in use; and other occupations required, than that of a Cavalier Servente.

The Chapel of the Caravan is neat and elegant. The walls are adorned with flags, standards, &c., spoils in former times taken from the enemy:—the Knights of the present day must content themselves with portraits, lockets, &c.—trophies of a more gentle kind, and more easily obtained.

Not far distant stood the famous *Torre della Fame*, where Count UGOLINO, his two sons, and three nephews, were confined, and cruelly starved to death. DANTE gives a very affecting description of this piece of barbarity in his thirty-third chapter *Del Inferno*, to which I refer you.

The University of Pisa is justly celebrated as one of the best in Italy, and has produced many learned men: having already mentioned GALI-

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LEO, it is needless to name another. It consists of several Colleges, where youth are educated and qualified for the professions of divinity, law, and physic. At each they are lodged and boarded, but cannot remain longer than six years, nor less than four. Degrees are not confirmed till after four years residence; each student must then produce a testimonial from the several Professors whose lectures he has attended; he is then examined for his degree, and from that moment becomes a Doctor to all intents and purposes.—Physicians, however, are obliged to attend the Hospital two years longer, before they are let loose upon the public.

At the Sapienza, where fifty students are lodged and boarded at the expence of the Sovereign, the public lectures are read. Formerly they were only read in Latin, they are now repeated afterwards in Italian. I have occasionally attended them, and found both instruction and entertainment. A course of private lectures in each science is also read by the Professors at their respective houses. The number of Professors is not limited. The fund from which their salaries are paid, as well as other expences of the University, was originally a tax granted by LEO X. and his successors on the estates of the church, to the amount of sixteen thousand crowns.—The Grand Duke, who has

taken the receipts into his own hands, allows the University seventeen thousand, instead of the former sum,—and, having made some new regulations, is thought to have made no bad bargain for himself.

The Professors are appointed by the Sovereign. Their salaries are not fixed, but vary according to circumstances and the different merits of the Professors: formerly all were raised twenty crowns at the end of every three years; instead of which, they are in future to have a larger salary. They receive also another augmentation, called *Accrescimento straordinario*, when they publish any work deserving of notice.

The Specula is an observatory well furnished with the necessary instruments; inhabited by a Professor, who is constantly employed in astronomical observations.

The Botanic Garden contains a great variety of plants, and a Professor is appointed to instruct the students in their several uses. A Museum is also annexed.

Chemistry, experimental philosophy, and anatomy, have also their Professors, and a course of lectures is read annually in each. The anatomists are supplied with bodies fresh from the Hospital, and copiously. I have read, that, in the time of the MEDICI family, the body of one criminal

criminal only was annually given to the University for the study of anatomy.—He must have stunk finely before they had done with him.

The Library is considerable, and increases daily. The students have the use of it, and the Professors the privilege of taking any of the books to their own houses. The University has a Tribunal independent of the Magistracy of Pisa, and try all causes, civil and criminal, that concern either the Professors or the scholars. The number of students exceed four hundred; and what, without doubt, will surprise you, not more than five or six of them are Pisans, who, to their disgrace be it spoken, are contented to remain illiterate in the midst of learned men.

Till lately, a very ridiculous custom prevailed on the day of San MARTINO.—The students had the privilege to catch a Jew, weigh him, and demand as many pounds of sugar-plums as he weighed;—you will conclude they picked out the fattest they could find.—The Grand Duke has abolished the custom, and a certain quantity of sugar-plums is annually given by the Jews instead of it.

Convents are diminished here, as well as in every other part of the Grand Duke's dominions. Instead of which, two *Conservatorios* have lately been established for the education of young ladies;

ladies; one of which is confined to the Noblesse only. They are admitted at the age of ten years, and may remain till eighteen. Thirty-six crowns a year are paid for their board, about nine pounds English; a trifling sum, and yet the Pisans think themselves aggrieved.—It is true, it cost them considerably less in the Convents: my friend P——, a man of the first Nobility, paid only twelve crowns a year for his sister's education:—though the emolument was inadequate to the consumption, the Nuns had their reasons, and found their advantage,—it frequently happened that a young lady took the veil, and spent her whole fortune among them.

The Grand Duke, fancying the corruption of manners to be owing to the indifferent education young women received in the Convents, has established Conservatorios:—but the same ignorance, and the same prejudices, must remain under the same teachers.—Would he alter the manners of his subjects, let them see virtue respected, and vice discouraged: if probity, good conduct, and fidelity, were in esteem, they would affect virtue, if they had it not;—it is true, it would be at the risk of a vice which, to give them their due, they are at present without.

Near the bridge towards the north, is a marble building, intended by Cosimo I. as an Emporium

rium for the merchandize of Leghorn, then a harbour only. On the other side is the Casino, where balls are given during the Carnival, and where ladies assemble in the Careme, but at no other time. The town has many fountains, and is amply supplied with excellent water; a benefit they owe to the MEDICI family, who brought it upon arches near five miles from the mountain of Asciano,—a work worthy their magnificence. Good water, my good Sir, is more essential to the prosperity of a people than you wine-drinkers are willing to allow.

The PRETENDER then is dead at last:—there was a time when this would have been joyful news at Saint James's.—A little sooner, and he had died on the very day his great-grandfather was beheaded. The pretensions of the STUART line now center in the King of Sardinia, who, I conclude, will have more sense than to take the title. The history of this unfortunate Prince is very extraordinary, and would make no bad figure in romance. He frequently suffered great difficulties, and was not always without great expectations. He had the weakness to talk of his army and his navy to the last; and was never so well pleased as when he could get any of the English about him. His brother, the Cardinal, was desirous of burying him with

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regal honors, but the Pope very wisely replied, " *As I have constantly refused him those honors while he was alive, I see no reason to allow them to him now that he is dead.*"

LETTER XXXVII.

THE Palace of the Grand Duke has little to be proud of, unless it be its situation on the best part of the Lungarno. Near it stands a statue representing plenty, erected to FERDINAND II., who reinstated Pisa, after her sufferings under a former reign.—One statue like this, indifferent as it is, does more honor to a Sovereign than all the statues of LOUIS XIV. for all his victories.

The Court usually remove hither from Florence the first week in November, and remain till after Easter: few of the *corps diplomatique* follow: nor have we levées, or drawing-rooms, as at other Courts; those who wish to be presented, desire an audience.—A Court that is a professed enemy to form, you will imagine but ill provided with Officers of State,—and it is frequently his Royal Highness's valet de chambre who presents you to him. Twice a week during

during Lent the Grand Duchess has regular assemblies, and foreigners who have been presented are always invited.

Though, from its distance to the capital, Pisa certainly may be considered as a place of retirement, yet the cares of Princes constantly follow them:—though the Grand Duke has not the insipid formality and inconvenient etiquette of a Court to undergo, yet has he the murmurings of discontent to encounter, and the insatiability of human wants to satisfy:—he gives up amusements; toils from morning till night in revoking old laws and forming new; and at last, like the Prophets of old, is more esteemed out of his own country than he is in it.

The education of the Arch Dukes is not neglected: they have masters in various sciences, and, as far as our usual conversation with Princes will authorise an opinion, are not wanting in talents. Report speaks well of their dispositions; and the severity with which their conduct is observed, answers for its regularity.—The amusements of Princes are seldom to be envied. Their lives are uniform: they drive out every day; sometimes go to the Opera, and enjoy every pleasure with greater restriction than any of their subjects.

The Cascine is a delightful spot, about three miles distant from Pisa, and consists of wood and

and lawn agreeably intermixed. It is part of the *Chasse reservée* of the Grand Duke. The Cascine at Florence is like the plantation of a private gentleman; this is like the forest of a Prince. If you take your tea equipage and bread from Pisa, every thing else may be found there: nor shall I soon forget the excellent breakfast I made at the Cascine. The cattle, the dairy, and their manner of making butter and cheese, merit observation. If you prefer going by water, for a sequin they will carry you, and bring you back.

At the Cascine many camels are bred.—The Devil take them!—they frightened my horse, which was near throwing me into the river.—They are, however, in themselves an useful, submissive, and profitable animal; will carry more than double the load of a horse, and eat a third less: they live chiefly on leaves in summer, and hay in winter. They are very tractable, and readily lay down to receive their burdens. They go best on the plain; cannot endure cold; and the softness of their feet renders them totally unfit for stony roads. We read, that these natives of the Desart can travel several days together without victuals or drink; and that the long hair which falls annually from their bodies, furnishes the Arabs with tents and clothing. Horses seem to have a natural dread

of

of a camel. An elegant modern historian is of a different opinion:—I fancy he is mistaken; but I esteem him too much to wish him to put it to the trial, as I have done, at the risk of a tumble.—I had the curiosity to mount one of them; the motion is very disagreeable, and so fatiguing that, I am told, the couriers in Asia who ride these animals are very short lived. In rising, they have three motions, at each of which you must sit with as much caution as at a standing leap.

Here are no longer any buffaloes: a monstrous ugly animal, and very savage in its nature. He is put to the same use as the ox, and is considerably stronger, though less, and more clumsily made. His horns do not project like those of the ox; nor is the flesh so good. He cannot bear the extremes either of heat or cold; and is only profitable in rushy grounds, where the ox cannot live. These animals, which are thought to be near-sighted, have a natural antipathy to a red colour, and will run at it when they see it. —It is well for you soldiers in red, that your enemies are not mounted on their backs.

Adjoining to the Cascine, they were shearing their sheep: an operation they perform here in the open fields. The sheep are perfectly tame, are caught easily, and, having their legs tied, lie quietly down to lose a burden, which, though it

is

is only the twelfth of March, they already find more troublesome than necessary. I observed a bit of wool left on the middle of their backs, tied into half a dozen knots: I asked its use; they replied—"*Per bellezza*" (for ornament).—I cannot say it answered the design. They asked me in return, if we had any of those animals in England.—I could not help smiling at the question, and told them—"*We have a few.*"

I know not if you have ever eat a frog: they are a common maigre dish in this country, make a good soup, and not a bad fricassée. Seeing some men on this road angling, as I thought, I stopped to look at them.—They were catching frogs.—I gave one of them my horse to hold, and took his rod.—I never fished with so much success, and, considered as a diversion only, I see no reason why it should not have the preference to fishing.—You shew the same dexterity in throwing the bait, and as much skill in pulling them out: you have neither worm, fly, nor fish to torture, for you use no hook; nor are you under the necessity of killing them afterwards: the bait is a bit of raw flesh; their own is as good as any.

Coltano, about five miles from Pisa, is another hunting seat of the Grand Duke, where the Stud is kept. I must remark two very extraordinary regulations I observed there: one, that of turning

ing out the stallion with the mares he is intended to cover; the other, that of not breeding from the same mare two years following. Though ERICTHOYTUS kept three thousand brood mares, HOMER tells us they bred a colt every year. This extraordinary custom of breeding from them only every other year is a new invention, as void of economy, as common sense.

The present establishment consists of eighteen stallions, and five hundred mares; five asses cover fifty of them. The asses are wonderful animals for size, strength, and shape. Two are lately arrived from Spain at an enormous expence;—money not ill bestowed to improve the breed, yet I cannot but lament that the horse, that noble and generous animal, should be thought less deserving his Royal Highness's favor.—Stallions also of a better kind are wanted, or the breed, which at present does not answer the expence, will shortly be good for nothing.—It is the more to be lamented, as Pisa is a University, and the art of horsemanship not only a necessary part of the education of a gentleman, but the exercise of it a benefit even to the studious. It was the breeding season, and the Master of the Horse, who knew of my coming, very kindly reserved a horse and an ass that I might see *the function* (for so I think he called it),—and was very much surprised, that the

lady

lady who accompanied me declined being of the party.

The house at Coltano is barely good enough to answer the purposes of a hunting seat. It is here the Grand Duke, in jack-boots water proof, that reach up to his middle, shoots wild fowl, which are in the greatest plenty. The whole country is a marsh, and consequently unhealthy in summer.

As a Shooting Seat it is but justice to say, it is finely planted;—the lawns are spotted with large clumps; narrow borders unite the woods, which extend more in length than breadth, and have walks cut through them. The walking is excellent; the shooting would be excellent likewise,—were there any thing to shoot at. We found three foxes, but neither hare nor bird, though I am confident our men and our dogs left nothing behind them undisturbed.

News is this instant arrived of the death of your rival with Lady ——, the *Abbé de Bourbon*, of the small-pox, at Naples. Not many months ago I saw him at Florence, revelling in all those luxuries to which youth, beauty, and riches invite,—the general admiration of every circle, and not improbably the secret wish of many a female;—the worms are now feeding on his carcase.—When an old man dies, his body worn out

out with infirmities, the faculties of the mind impaired, and every part visibly tending to its dissolution, death may be considered rather as a relief from pain, than a deprivation from pleasure.—Life then goes out like a candle burning and stinking in the socket.—But in the bloom of youth, the grim visitant comes unlooked for; the body is in full vigor to oppose him, and the contest is dreadful; while the mind, too much attached to the pleasures of this world, foregoes them with reluctance, and sometimes resigns them with desperation.—A Swedish lady, at the point of death, was observed by her attendants to be in this horrid state: she was advised to be more resigned, as her death was inevitable. She replied—"*She would not die;—that she had never been married;—that it was a pleasure she was intended to enjoy, and was determined not to go out of the world without it!*"—The intention was laudable; the determination only was too late; and she died notwithstanding.—But, to return to the poor Abbé de Bourbon. One cannot but lament the obstinacy which prevents mankind from opening their eyes to the benefit of inoculation, and has deprived the world of a young man who might otherwise have long continued one of its greatest ornaments.—

Postscript.—While writing the above Letter, I have been disturbed by a cry of fire: it was of little consequence, and extinguished presently. I have been horridly afraid of fire ever since an accident that happened to me at Turin. I had been indisposed, and, though getting better, still kept my bed. Music is never more agreeable than when we are in a state of indolence, and incapable of employment: I fancied it might do me good; I was certain it would give me pleasure; and musicians were sent for. It being late when they came, they gave me to understand, that if I kept them after eleven, I must give them a supper, for the next day being a fast, they could not eat meat after twelve o'clock.

When they were dismissed, they retired into a large hall adjoining to my bed-chamber, where a great fire was made, the weather being intensely cold, and a supper prepared. How long they staid I know not; attention to the music, and my weak state made repose welcome, and I soon fell into the most profound sleep. It is supposed that some timber in the chimney communicated with the wainscot of the chamber where I slept; and it is also probable that no fire, or at least no such fire, had ever been made there before. About three o'clock in the morn-

ing I was awoke by my dog, who had jumped upon the bed, was exceedingly restless, and was lying upon me. The room was now full of smoke, and one side of it on fire. How I got out of bed I know not, for the fright had so totally deprived me of my senses, that I did not at the first moment recollect where I was, or where to find either door or window. I had, however, sense enough left to perceive the want of them, and I returned to my bed to quiet and recollect myself: I soon perceived what had, in some measure, occasioned my confusion,—that the fire I then saw was not in the chimney, but on the opposite side of the room: it was evident also, that the danger of suffocation and burning was advancing rapidly.

Recovered from my fright, my first care was to pull the bell, and call my servants.—Half suffocated, I then opened the window, which I had better not have done, as it immediately set the whole room in a blaze: the door was then opened, and my servants judging from the tone of the bell that all was not right, ran down in an instant nearly as Nature made them, and having plenty of water, they soon extinguished the fire.

Whether it was the intention of my dog to alarm me of my danger, or seek my protection; whether

whether it was a regard for himself, or his regard for me, that induced him to wake me, may not be easy to determine; but it is past a doubt, that honest Smutz, the most faithful of dogs, thus saved his master's life.

LETTER XXXVIII.

WHEN the different Republics submitted to the Florentine yoke, it is to be supposed that all made the best terms they could, and some enjoyed privileges peculiar to themselves. These privileges have gradually decreased, and the government of the Grand Duke's dominions is now, with very little difference, in every part the same. Florence, the capital of Tuscany, is the residence of the Ministry and seat of justice. To that tribunal in civil causes the parties may appeal, and from thence criminal sentences must receive their confirmation.

Of the commerce, manufactures, and trade of Pisa, I have little to say,—and still less of the arts.—No RAPHAEL, CORREGIO, or TITIAN! —No CLAUDE, SALVATOR ROSA, or POUSSIN!—and Sculpture, which was once their boast, is no longer heard of. Commerce is removed

removed to Leghorn; manufactures have gradually declined; and the only trade which seems to succeed, is that of a cabinet-maker.—Shops in general are miserably provided; and even the roguery of an Italian tradesman is put to its shifts to gain a livelihood.—Chimney-sweepers sell pins and needles; and apothecaries, wax-candles, tea, and sugar,—for physicians in Italy do not dose their patients for the sake of the apothecaries, like some we know in another country,—a practice as mean as it is inhuman. After what I have said of the apothecaries, you will of course conclude, that the Pisans are in general healthy, and physicians scarce. Medical gentlemen differ as much at Pisa as at other places; for where there is rivality, cordiality is not to be expected: one of them falling dangerously ill, sent, as usual, for a brother doctor, who on the arrival of the messenger said to a friend who was with him—"See how the fellow uses me! He has now fallen ill on purpose to ruin me;—I cannot refuse to attend him; and if he should die, as most probably he will, it will be said that *I* killed him *to get rid of him.*"

Notwithstanding the extreme poverty of the town of Pisa, it cannot be denied that it has many advantages. The Court, Caravan, University, and Strangers, leave annually a considerable sum of money behind them. It is possible,

sible, indeed, that too much of this may get into other hands. The Pisa markets are chiefly supplied by strangers; and there is besides a monopoly carried on at the gates that ought in good policy to be prevented.

The unnecessary number of holidays, which contribute not a little to the idleness of the Italians, and consequently to their poverty, are greatly reduced in Tuscany. Popery is out of fashion. A Bishop, by some thought of Protestant principles, publicly opposes many of its tenets, owing, it is supposed, to the following circumstance:—Some Nuns in a Convent at Prato, having adopted a strange kind of doctrine, by the persuasion of some Friars who occasionally visited them, grew so refractory that the Abbess lost her authority: they would not attend mass, nor observe any of the rites their religion required, fully persuaded that they were arrived at a state of perfection, which rendered religious ceremonies no longer necessary; and that even acts of sin might be committed with impunity.—This convenient doctrine is called *Quietism*. The Abbess complained to the Bishop; the Bishop to the Sovereign, who ordered the Friars to be removed, and the Nuns to Florence. The Pope, considering this as an encroachment on his spiritual authority, sent for the Bishop to give an account of his conduct:

thus

thus the affair becoming serious, the Grand Duke supported his Bishop, and the Pope, through good policy, gave up the contest.—Such was the beginning, it is thought, of our present *Jansenism*, which, though no longer heard of in France, is reviving in Tuscany. We have ladies who call themselves Jansenists, without knowing, I believe, what it means. I will tell them one of its tenets.—The man who cohabits with his wife with any other intention than that of perpetuating his species, is guilty of a sin: such, therefore, as are pregnant, must forego their exclusive privilege.—It was this severe doctrine that gave LOUIS XV. his first mistress; and the French nation, the pernicious councils of a POMPADOUR.

The Archbishop of Pisa is Primate of Sardinia and Corsica. We read, that the Canons are all of them noble, and have the privilege of wearing the dress of Cardinals.—It is true, they were noble; but as the Grand Duke has lately introduced among them some that are not, it is clearly his intention they should no longer remain so.—As to the privilege above mentioned, I cannot find any proof that it ever existed.

Saint RANIERI is the tutelar Saint of the town and country of Pisa. He lived in the twelfth century; and it is in honor of that Saint, that, every third year, on the sixteenth of June, the

the famous *Illuminara* (illumination) is exhibited. It is not possible to give an adequate description of that extraordinary festival, nor in any other town in Europe would it have the same effect as on the Lungarno at Pisa. The public buildings and bridges are illuminated at the expence of the community; the houses, by each proprietor according to his own taste and munificence. Every small house, and every remote corner, contribute to the general splendor; but the *Piazza dei Cavalieri*, and the *Lungarno*, are most worthy the notice of a stranger.

Fancy to yourself a long and wide street, with a large river running through the middle of it in the most beautiful curve imaginable; on either side the doors and windows of every house, without exception, illuminated; each forming a detached, but perfect piece of ornamental architecture: public buildings lavishly adorned in fancied shapes: a prison that looks like a palace; a palace like an enchanted castle: bare walls of Convents become beautiful façades, and market-places arches of triumph:—to complete the whole, the bridges at either extremity close and collect this blaze of light with innumerable lamps beautifully disposed and reflected in the water.—The effect is wonderful—the very stars are darkened—and you have an artificial day at midnight: in short, you might fancy yourself in the

the regions of PLUTO—in a town of fire.—But as all sights tire after a time, and as seeing is the sense that is soonest satisfied, Pisans! would you render your Illuminara still more perfect, place several bands of music on the water to please the ear, and, at a given hour, let off a firework on the middle bridge as a signal for the company to go to supper.

The boat-race, the diversion of the next day, is not without its merit. The river is covered with boats; the parapet walls on each side are covered with people; and every window is crowded with well dressed women of fashion.

The expence of the Illuminara is not less than twenty thousand crowns; a considerable sum,—but, as one good turn deserves another, it is to be hoped that the Saint makes ample amends to the poor Pisans afterwards.

In our frequent conversations on these subjects, I have had occasion to mention the sights which have pleased and surprised me most:—The Music in Westminster Abbey, in commemoration of HANDEL; the Illumination of Saint Peter's, and Girandola at Rome; a Rigatta at Venice; and the function of San GENNARO at Naples,—not on account of the miracle, but on account of the number and enthusiasm of the people who accompany it.—The Illuminara at Pisa is not inferior to either.

LETTER XXXIX.

A RIDICULOUS circumstance happened the other night. The bell of San Pietrino rung at twelve o'clock; the people were alarmed; the Sbirri assembled; and it was generally thought the town was on fire. The priest of San Pietrino, who perhaps had drank a little too freely in the evening, mistook the moon for the sun, fancied it was day at midnight, rung the bell, and was preparing to celebrate mass, when the people arrived in multitudes to extinguish the fire.—This was a farce; but, contrary to the common order of representations, a tragedy shortly after followed. Five Jews of Leghorn, walking about the streets of Pisa, were said to have been guilty of some indecency towards the Christian Religion. The report soon caused a general tumult. They were insulted—pursued—and one of them murdered. At that instant an unfortunate Turk passing through the same street,

street, was suspected to belong to the same company, and most inhumanly treated. He tried to escape, but in vain. He ran into several houses to implore assistance, but could find none; they forced him out, tore his beard, pelted him with stones, and would soon have finished him, had not Providence directed his steps towards the door of a foreign minister, which luckily at that time stood open: he entered,—but it was not to the protection he met with there; it was not to the respect that in all civilized countries is shewn to the residence of a Minister; nor was it to the interposition of Government in his favor, that this miserable and wounded object owed his preservation,—but to a door so fortified, that every attempt to force it proved ineffectual. In this state of warfare did we remain (for I had part of the same house) for near three hours, exposed to the fury of an incensed mob, and that a religious one,—the most violent, the least humane, and perhaps the only one that is not sensible of fear. At length a few militia men, and nine dragoons on horseback, came to our assistance, and raised the siege. It was now late at night, and the people, some hungry, some weary, retired to their respective habitations to eat and sleep.

A Turk arriving at Leghorn from Constantinople to see his friend, the unfortunate person I have

have just mentioned, had followed him to Pisa, and arrived on one side the Arno at the very time of the riot on the other. Curiosity led him to inquire what the mob were about: he was told that the Pisans were murdering every Jew and every Turk they could find.—"*Baggatella!*" replied the Turk; "*turn about, postillion!*"—and I trust it will be some time before the town of Pisa will see that gentleman's face again.

You need not conclude from this disturbance, that the Pisans are more riotous than their neighbours; since it is highly probable any other people, with the same provocation, the same power, and no opposition, would have done worse. No country is secure but by the protection of its laws; nor can laws avail, unless there be a sufficient force at all times ready to preserve the peace, and punish offenders. Formerly, I am told, a Cavalier de San Stefano could disperse a mob, and quiet a disturbance: I believe any Cavalier who was to attempt it now, would be thrown himself into the Arno—*Buttar in Arno*, is the common threatening of an angry Pisan: a punishment for all offences: a kind of Purgatory,—but such a one as not all the Saints that ever saved a sinner can get you out of, unless you can swim. I wish this unfortunate accident may serve as a lesson to my coun-

countrymen never to give offence in matters of Religion: here was one man murdered, others wounded, and a town in rebellion, occasioned, as it is generally allowed, by the merest trifle;—but that trifle was a religious one, and Religion is not to be trifled with.

As you will probably ask in what the force of the town of Pisa consists, I will tell you without waiting the inquiry. It consists of eighteen *Sbirri*, ten of whom, if I am rightly informed, were employed the other day to secure one man; and a Militia of one hundred and fifty Pisans, all of whom, sixteen excepted, who mount the guard, are at work in their shops, or sleeping in their beds; and when wanted may not be found, and if found, may refuse to come: they are liable to no punishment; are hired at a livre and a half a day; and may demand their discharge at the end of it. We have also nine Dragoons. I saw this troop in actual service, when they had enough to do to manage their own horses; and, before the affair was over, I concluded half of them would have been sent to the hospital.—Surely the Pisans must be naturally good, and peaceably inclined, or this is not a proper force to keep them in subjection.

You may also wish to know, how the death of the Jew has been received at Florence; and what punishment is likely to be inflicted on the mur-

murderer. The latter I can already tell you—*the galleys;* and a temporal confinement for the other offenders. By a new code of laws just published, no crime, however atrocious, is any longer to be punished with death; instead of which they are sent to the galleys, and are lodged, clothed, and fed, at the expence of the Sovereign.—They are in chains, it is true; but, that excepted, they are not more confined than the man who guards them. Their labour is to clean the streets; very moderate, and not unwholesome exercise. Each is allowed twenty-eight ounces of bread a day; three times a week they have a soup made of beans; and every day they work, four soldi are paid to each. They are also found in shoes and stockings.—Murderers are distinguished by a chain which they wear round their necks—*a kind of Order:* they ought, indeed, to go barefoot; the latter, however, is dispensed with,—I cannot conceive why, unless it be to render their situation better, in every respect, than that of a common labourer.

Curiosity led me to see the den where these wild beasts are kept. One thing surprised me; they falsify an old proverb, *you can have no more of a cat than her skin,*—for they skin her first, and eat her afterwards. The gentleman who was with me lamented the fate of the Gallerians, and

and laid great stress on their laying on benches, and being confined for life: and yet there are at Naples not less than thirty thousand Lazzaroni, and some honest men I suppose among them, who have no other bed:—and what are Convents, I beg to know, but prisons for life?—It is not necessary punishment should be cruel,—it is sufficient that it be certain.—The torments of a RAVILLAC did not prevent a DAMIEN.—But, to keep mankind tolerably honest, no wilful offence should escape without some punishment: Mercy, that heavenly prerogative, should be exercised with discretion.—It was the imprudent pardon of an assassin that deprived the world of a WINKELMAN:—and the galleys in Tuscany are rendered so mild a punishment, that the murderer glories in his villany.—The jailor told one of them the other day, that he was the worst of villains: if others were guilty of robbery, it was for something considerable; if they committed murder, it was to satisfy revenge: while he had cruelly murdered a poor cripple, for the paltry sum of seventeen pauls.—"*All this is true,*" replied the Gallerian, with great composure; "*and it is not less true, that I have by that means secured to myself a livelihood.*"

Another is just arrived, who offended in some manner or other by the curate of his parish, shot him while he was saying mass. The whole

whole congregation, as you may suppose, were in the utmost confusion; and he was told to run away: for in this country, those sentiments of honor which prompt every man to secure an offender are totally unknown. He replied—"*He preferred being sent to the galleys: he frequently had not bread to eat; he was sure to find it there as long as he lived.*"

Of the prisons I shall only observe, that they are such as Mr. HOWARD has seen, and disapproved: but I should hate myself, could I mention the name of that gentleman, and not pay a just tribute to his memory,—a name already celebrated, but more honored by the uncommon benevolence of that private individual, than by all the titles of all its peers.

One disagreeable consequence has arisen from the Pisa riot that very much affects your humble servant: the Grand Duke has just announced to us, from Florence, that we are no longer to expect the *Gioco del Ponte*,—a severe punishment on the town of Pisa.*

The origin of this extraordinary festival is unknown. The river which divides the town, separates the two contending factions of Saint

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* The usual time was once in three years.

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Antonio and Saint Maria, each of which furnishes three hundred and twenty *combattenti* (combatants), clad in a complete suit of heavy armour, to dispute the passage of the bridge, which at the first onset is equally divided between them, and at the end of three quarters of an hour victory is declared in favor of those who have made their antagonists retreat. The offensive weapon to obtain this purpose is a kind of club: with this they parry, sometimes strike, but more commonly push. The form of attack is a kind of phalanx, and so close, that the officers walk on the heads of the men, whose helmets, which, for greater security, are closed after they are put on, are so battered by the hard blows they receive from the enemy, that it is not always easy to get them off again.

Twenty-four *Celestini*, so called I know not why, are solely employed in making prisoners, by catching the enemy by the legs, and throwing them on their backs. They are all picked men; are less armed than the rest; have no weapon; and as their faces are exposed, they keep themselves almost upon their knees, and are defended by the Combattenti. They have also twenty-four attendants to take charge of, and carry away the prisoners they make.

As the principal object is to make prisoners, and thereby weaken the force of the enemy, the

activity of the Celestini usually decides the fate of the battle; towards the end of which, and when the three quarters of an hour are nearly expired, the Combattenti who are then in possession of the greatest part of the bridge, stand an unmoveable mass, suffering the blows of their antagonists with patience till the flag drops, and the cavalry enter to disperse them all.—It is called a game, but seldom ends without some broken bones: they fight in earnest; and the whole town is interested in the event: every man, woman, and child, is on one side or the other; even husbands and wives have been known to separate beds, and not speak to each other for several weeks before and after. The party beaten seldom make their appearance any more that day. The greatest calamity could not occasion more general concern. A Lucca gentleman, on a visit to a friend at Pisa, who, unluckily for him, was on the side that had been worsted, was surprised to see no preparation for supper: but much more, when his friend told him, with a lamentable countenance—" *That it was no longer a time to think of such trifles.*"

The last Gioco del Ponte was given in the year 1785, at the arrival of the King of Naples, who, observing the splendor of Pisa on that occasion, asked the Grand Duke, how many classes of Nobility he had in Tuscany. The Grand

Grand Duke replied—" *He knew but of two distinctions in his dominions—men and women.*" Tell me, you cunning ones,—you who know the secret intricacies of the human heart,—was this the speech of a Republican, or a Despot!

The same Sovereign, if I am rightly informed, had once the strange idea of restoring to the Tuscans their former liberty—that is, *after his own decease.*—Reflect on that also.

LETTER XL.

A STRANGER might fancy the Pisans never die. He will meet no corpse, nor will he hear a bell toll. Burials are now performed by night, and without ceremony: prayers are said in the church without the body, and the body is put into the grave without a prayer. When the corpse was carried into the church, priests were not free from the suspicion of burying the body in order to save the wax. So fearful were the ancient Romans of burying their dead alive, that they kept them till the eighth day, consequently till they stunk. It is well known, that many persons in this country have been buried alive. One man is an extraordinary living instance of it. I have seen him; conversed with him; and have heard this part of his history from his own mouth:—That having laid two hours at the Hospital, and two more in the Chapel, he was carried to his grave: and

and to the indelicate manner of burying the dead without a coffin he owes his present existence:—the extreme coldness of the ground, it being the depth of winter, restored him to his senses;—the dead man on a sudden started up in his grave, and the Sexton, who was at this instant covering him with earth, his teeth chattering, and limbs trembling, threw his spade at him, and ran away.—The wounded object, thus left alone, disengaged himself as well as he was able from the earth that surrounded him; took up his winding-sheet, which was near at hand, wrapped himself up in it, and crawled back again upon his hands and knees into the chapel from whence he was brought.—A horrible spectre!—His head fresh bleeding from the wound he had just received, realized in some degree that chimera of a nurse's brain, that imaginary Hobgoblin, — *a raw-head and bloody-bones.* The Parson, who at this instant was coming out of the chapel, meeting this spectre crawling into it, fancied it was the Devil, and ran away also. The alarm now became general; a large body of Friars came in procession, with the Parson at their head, and, after many signs of the Cross, and usual exorcisms, demanded of him, in the name of GOD THE FATHER, the SON, and HOLY GHOST, whence he came, and what he wanted. The poor fellow by this time was able

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to give an account of himself; related his distresses, eased them of their fears, and was carried back again to the hospital. Though very old, he is strong and lusty; and may conclude perhaps, that having once died, he is now to live for ever.

You hear as little of marriages, as you see of burials. The Pisans are in general too poor to bear the additional burden of a family. The eldest son only can afford to marry. You will little suspect the Italians of declining marriage in the month of May:—a ridiculous superstition, of very ancient date. The months of April and June were thought most propitious to wedlock: the Romans preferred the latter. The month of May was constantly precluded;—the month, of all others, the most congenial to love; and the only one in which a French lady, La Marquise de S——, said she could not answer for herself.—Some tell you, it is because asses cover at that season,—a most excellent reason truly! In my reckoning, two days only are of consequence in the whole year,—Saint THOMAS and Saint BARTHOLOMEW; the one best suited to a young couple, the other to an old one.

Four or five thousand crowns is the usual Pisa dower; half of which returns to the family of the wife, should she die without issue within the

the year. I am sorry to add, four or five crowns a month is the usual Pisa pin-money. A widow is worse off; she is entitled to no more than she brings. I know one, and of the first nobility, who if she were to marry, or otherwise leave the family of her husband, where she is at present boarded, and has the use of a coach and servants, could claim only her own fortune—the miserable pittance of a thousand crowns: which, at four per cent. would not produce more than ten pounds a year,—considerably less than the wages, &c. of a common house-maid. By an old law, a husband was not permitted to leave his wife a legacy. The law perhaps was not an unwise one; but then the jointure should be larger; nor should the fortune of the wife be any consideration, if insufficient to maintain her. The increased luxury of the times, and the little proportion the fortune of the wife bears to the expence she occasions, keep many asunder that Nature would otherwise unite; and there seems to be no better understanding between CUPID and HYMEN before, than there is after marriage. —Poor girls! it is you who are the sufferers. A Sposo discoursing with the mother of a young lady on the subject of her marriage portion, the smallness of which he objected to, the girl, pulling him by the sleeve, said—"*Pray, Sir, take my mother's money if you can.*"

Youth

Youth are educated at Pisa, better, as far as relates to the Sciences, than in any part of Italy. The Professors are most of them of distinguished learning; exact in their lectures; and the young men who come hither to study, finding few temptations to be idle, may improve if they will take the trouble. From a private tutor of sense and discernment, who will lead on his pupil step by step, from the most easy science, to that which is most difficult, constantly clearing the way before him, more knowledge is to be acquired than from a public lecturer.—United, they seem to answer the purposes of education best, and in this point of view the University of Pisa is excellent. Three young men of fashion of Cremona are sent hither under the care of an Abbé of good family and great talents. They live in good company, and in a healthy town, where they neither see dissipation nor extravagance. The public lectures of the University are made the subject of their private conversation, and by mixing a knowledge of the world with their studies, it will be their own fault if they become not men of learning without pedantry; and if they add not the advantages of a public education to the benefit of a private one.

We think alike with regard to our great English schools; and though I would certainly send a son to one of them, for the sake of the advantages

vantages that are peculiar to them, yet would I as certainly remove him from thence before he arrived at an age to be tainted by the vices which so generally prevail there, and should hope in a couple of years, under the tuition of a man of sense and learning, that he would acquire *more useful knowledge* than schools usually afford. Some lay too great a stress on the advantage of knowing mankind. A better knowledge might be *to know yourself.* Both, however, are necessary; but it is less material to know whether Mr. A—— is most knave or fool, than to find out and correct that depravity, or debility of mind, which may naturally incline you either to one or the other. The *Pythian Oracle** is a surer guide to happiness than Sir CLEMENT COTTEREL.†

POSTSCRIPT.—Notwithstanding that fighting is out of fashion in Italy, *in every way*, I expected (and left my letter open on purpose) to have sent you news of a Pisa Duel. Blows past the other day between two Gentlemen in a public coffee-house, but, as far as I can find, no

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* The *Pythian Oracle* says—"*Know thyself.*"

† Sir CLEMENT COTTEREL, Master of the Ceremonies.

notice

notice whatever has been taken of it. Surgeons, in this country, do more mischief with their lancets, than gentlemen with their swords. In the reign of LOUIS XIII., the first question in the morning was—Who fought yesterday? After dinner—Who fought this morning? They frequently fought several on a side, and if one was wanted to make up the number, a messenger was sent in search of the first Gentleman that could be found. In the famous duel between the Duke of BEAUFORT and the Duke of NEMOURS, they fought five against five. The Duke of NEMOURS was killed, and two others of the combatants; the rest were slightly wounded. The most extraordinary duel *we* have upon record is that between Lord BRUCE and Sir EDWARD SACKVILLE; you will find it in The Guardian. The frequency of duelling in France is partly owing to a custom, long established, of repeating private conversation. A pretty service you render your friends, Gentlemen, in telling them what they must be sorry to hear, and are bound in honor to resent! A blow in that country admits of no reparation.—The parties must fight till one falls.—Should he recover, they must fight again, and so on, till death at last puts an end to the combat. There has been an instance of two Officers fighting for the same offence six times following. This is the excess

of

of barbarity! I had rather see the right hand of the man who gave the blow chopped off by the common hangman, than that an innocent person, perhaps a whole family, should be involved in one general distress by the intemperance or brutality of a man whom I cannot consider otherwise than as an honorable assassin. The brave GASSION, Marshal of France, told his son, that, "*Though he should become his greatest enemy if he wanted courage, he would be second to his antagonist if ever he attempted to shew that courage by fighting a duel which he could avoid with honor.*" Though I have dwelt longer on this subject than I first intended, do not fancy that I am a duellist;—I detest the practice, and lament as much as you can do, the unfortunate situation of a Gentleman who is never secure in the uprightness of his own conduct, but always at the mercy of any rascal who is brutal enough wantonly to affront him. There are affronts which a man of honor, who values reputation more than life, cannot put up with. Prudence and Christianity forbid his resentment, but prejudice too often prevails against them both.

LETTER XLI.

THE income of the Nobility of Pisa, is smaller than would be credited in any part of England, and I should risk being thought the most lying of all Travellers, were I to relate half of what they do with it. Twelve hundred crowns is a tolerable Pisa income. With this they keep a coach, horses, and servants; have a box at the theatre; and live, in external appearance at least, equal to the people of fashion in other countries. Their stile of living, in their own houses, is best known to themselves, for it is not usual to invite others to partake of it. You will observe in the very poorest towns of Italy, magnificence abroad, and misery at home. Pride will not abate an inch of its outward finery, though the whole family smart for it. It is otherwise in France. The French consider parade no more than as it contributes to their convenience; they keep an excellent table, nor will they starve themselves to add a few servants

to

to their equipage. A friend of mine, dining with a French Gentleman at his country-house (they go to their estates to get money, not to spend it), observed a hole in the wall, and asked him, if he could not stop it? "*Stop it:*"—Yes, to be sure I could," replied the Marquis, "but it must be with the leg of mutton now before us, *and I had rather see it upon the table.*" A widow lady, who could ill afford two footmen behind her carriage, and knew that one only was necessary, had a figure stuffed with straw to answer the purpose of the other. The invention succeeded admirably, till one unlucky day making a visit near to a stand of hackney-coaches, one of the half-starved animals smelt out the straw, and eat up the footman.

To feel the warmth of summer in the depth of winter; to seek the shade, and yet see the distant mountains covered with snow, are circumstances peculiar to the climate and situation of Pisa; nor are they its only recommendation. Invalids in fortune, as well as invalids in health, find benefit in a town where living is cheap, and the inhabitants free from every extravagance. —A countryman of ours (an invalid of the former class), single, and without a servant, was lodged, boarded, and found with candles, attendants, &c. for five pauls; his whole daily expence not exceeding half-a-crown. A family

may

may be lodged for ten sequins a month, and supplied from a traiteur at their own price. The dinner of an English gentleman, consisting of three masters and four servants was served for twelve pauls a day :—bread and wine only excepted. Traiteurs, neither here nor elsewhere, will serve you well two days following, unless kept up to it by scolding. I heard a French Gentleman complain of a good dinner; he said—" *he complained, that he might not be starved the next day.*" Put confidence in an Englishman, and give him good words, he will use you well. In France and in Italy you must do the reverse :—put no confidence, and continually find fault.

A coach for the whole day, is ten pauls, buona mano to the coachman included. For the evening, you pay only six. A horse is hired for three pauls. A box at the theatre for the Carnival is eight sequins. A stranger must be contented to pay more, his ignorance or his necessity are irresistable temptations in the way of an Italian. If you love music, you may indulge that taste at little cost.—Musicians for a concert are paid five pauls. To Sforzi, who will lead the band, you may give ten; and he will give you a Sonata on the Mandoline into the bargain. The price of Masters is a sequin a month; with twenty livres you pay hand-

handsomely; with two sequins you pay like an Englishman; one sous more, and, *you pay like a fool.*

I foresee other prices. A colony of English established for one winter at Pisa, will introduce new customs, and strange demands. Luxury and extravagance accompany us every where, which the natives cannot see without regret, or imitate without ruin. Man is best suited to his native soil, and will seldom bear transplanting: —even Omai was glad to return to his own country.

The markets are well supplied, and with great variety. A red-legged partridge, and a carrion crow, I once saw on the same board: had I had a servant with me, I would have bought both out of curiosity.—Nothing comes amiss to an Italian stomach. Fish is in great plenty. The red mullet excellent; but the Mediterranean turtle, I am sorry to say, is not like that of the Atlantic. Pistoia mutton, and Lucca veal, are famous; and beef as good at Pisa, as in London. It is not a good town for an Epicure notwithstanding; not that he will have little to eat, but because he will have little appetite, which he would think as bad. The air is heavy, and exercise, which was the Spartan sauce, is necessary here. The Proverb says—"*Pisa pesa a chi posa.*" In England, where all

all the morning you are flying over the country after a fox, or climbing the hills after partridges or woodcocks, you may at your return eat as you please,—here you should eat little. Doctor FRANKLIN, who lived to a great age, and was always remarkably healthy, made it a rule, if not to fast, at least to live abstemiously one day out of the seven. CORNARO cured himself of a bad disorder, and continued healthy to an advanced age, by temperance alone: read what that worthy gentleman has written on the subject, though you do not practise it; and should a dish at any time be wanting at your table, let CORNARO be served up instead of it. If I am more healthy than others of the same age, I owe it all to temperance, to early hours, and a total abstinence from wine. Monsieur DUMONTIN, a famous physician at Paris, being on his deathbed, and surrounded by many of the faculty, said—"Gentlemen, *I am going;* but I leave behind me *three great physicians.*" Each thinking himself included in the number, begged earnestly that he would name them: he did so—"*L'Eau; l'Exercise; et la Diete.*" The Court and common people dine at one, the Noblesse at two.

I cannot say the moist air of this town agrees with me. To day it is particularly oppressive. When the sky is overcast, and the rain pours down

down without intermission, we feel ourselves oppressed, and usually exclaim, "*How heavy the air is;*" yet the air is lighter then than at another time. We feel ourselves oppressed, it is true, but from another cause: the vessels are more dilated, having less external pressure; and the blood is consequently retarded in its circulation. Much of this oppression did I feel at times during the three winters I passed here; others have felt the same. A Frenchman who had spent three weeks at Pisa, in the month of November, when it rained incessantly, returned three years after at the same season on a very wet day:—"*Morbleu!*" said he, "*quel chien de pays: il pleuvoit quand je suis parti, il y a trois ans que je suis absent, et il pleut encore.*"

Winter is notwithstanding the best season to be at Pisa. It snows so seldom here, that a young Pisan might be as much surprised at the sight of it, as the Negro who was sent from Jamaica to my house in Dorsetshire, for the recovery of his health: he fancied the first snow he saw was cotton blown from the trees. For invalids, the Lungarno is the best situation. Though fogs are less frequent than at Florence, they have more rain, not like a Scotch mist, that is said to wet an Englishman to the skin, but a downright heavy rain that no covering is a match for: you see, indeed, in the morning

the weather you are to expect, and, as sudden showers seldom fall, it will be your own fault if you are ever wet. A constant fire, as in England, is without example. When a stranger arrives, or they wish particularly to warm themselves, they make a *fiammata*, that is, they burn a faggot. Though they seldom approach a fire, they will sit a whole day with a vase of burning coals in their laps, and another under their petticoats. The men are not less chilly than the women: they are wrapped up in their cloaks, even in the middle of the day, to their very noses—a custom totally unaccountable, unless, like the Arabs, they wear their cloaks to keep off the sun. I know one, who for the night has an excellent contrivance: he gets into a sack, and when warm in bed, kicks it off; his wife does the same. I know nothing of Pisa in summer; but am told, that the excessive heat is greatly moderated by the *maestrale*, or sea-breeze, which invariably blows from ten in the morning till the evening.

Of the public diversions of Pisa I have little to say. The Theatre is large enough for the number of inhabitants; and the Opera sometimes good, sometimes bad, as in other places, but always cheap. A first singer, singing almost every night throughout the Carnival, is well paid at one hundred sequins; while in England

you

you pay more than twenty times that sum: in short, you spoil them, and may thank yourselves for their impertinence.—You pay half a guinea at the door, we pay only a shilling.

At Pisa, during the Carnival, masks claim a right to enter every box, and frequently sit themselves down in a corner without speaking a word. This piece of impertinence, and the inconvenience of having your box-door continually open in a cold season, render the Theatre particularly disagreeable. Only the last days of the Carnival can now give you an idea what a Carnival once was. You see but few masks, and few characters sustained with propriety. A young fellow, perfectly well made, painted his body black, and walked naked, his waist only excepted, on the Lungarno, to personate a Moor;—he caught a fever, and died. If I thought I should be believed, I would also add, that his brother, the Carnival following, committed the same folly, and died in the same manner.

The Pisans are not expensive in their dress. Economy in this particular they learn of their Master, who, when he is dressed, appears always in a uniform; and, in his undress, is not to be distinguished from the shabbiest of his subjects, and yet I have a fat coachman who takes snuff and wears ear-rings.—I wish he knew how to

drive.—He has neither eye nor hand, and the fellow turns like an alligator. When I was at Turin in my younger days, fat coachmen were in fashion. Marquis PRIE´ sent to Paris for the fattest that could be procured, and the first day he drove, he ran him against a post. PRIE´, with the greatest composure let down the fore-glass of his chariot, and said—" *Ecoutez, mon ami, ce n'est pas tout d'avoir un gros ventre il faut le savoir conduire.*"

Italians in general have few occupations. Those who are not Cavalier Servente's have nothing to do, and pass the greatest part of their time in the streets and coffee-houses. Day succeeds day in the same dull uniformity, and you are certain at the same place, and at the same hour, to meet the same company.

You meet many crooked people in the streets that the Spartans would have destroyed; to which the being *fasciati*, that is, swaddled up for months like an Egyptian mummy, may probably contribute. The method may be convenient, but it is impossible to express, for we know not half the ills it may occasion. The ancients procured their dwarfs somewhat after the same manner. It is thus by confinement the Chinese procure little feet. Luckily in England this folly is unknown. The tender limbs of our infants are not squeezed into unnatural forms, but are permitted

mitted to grow like those of other animals, as natnre intended them.

The common people, whom I rather suspect to be indolent and idle, and, like the Florentines, more disposed to chatter than to work, have one excellent quality that makes amends for many failings.—They are not revengeful, nor do they use knives in their quarrels like other Italians. They box; but are not over scrupulous in the manner, and will readily enough fall three or four upon one. They are thought to be wanting in humanity. Two French Officers lately came from Leghorn to see Pisa, when one of them stooping to pick up his hat, which had fallen into the river, fell in himself, and was drowned. I am sorry to add, that no trouble whatever was taken to get him out: and yet, if a fowl fall in, an accident I have seen happen, the whole town is in an uproar. But a fowl is good to eat, whereas a drowned Frenchman is good for nothing.

The visiting hour is from eleven to one at noon, and in winter at five in the evening. Where you are intimate you go when you please. The women at Pisa wear no rouge unless they want it; and then it is laid on naturally: if they do not improve nature, at least they do not render it monstrous. Few of them take snuff. If women did but know how much rouge, un-

na-

naturally put on, disfigures them; and how offensive snuff is to more senses than one, vanity would surely prevent the use of either. They wear no caps. Many only a ribband fillet such as ARTEMESIA wore. It is simple and becoming. Their teeth are in general bad, but whether it be owing to the humidity of the air, or the little care they take of them, I cannot determine. I have just had a curious conversation with one of them on the subject of Love Potions, Evil Eyes, and Witchcraft;—a superstition that Italy has been always famous for from VIRGIL's days to ours; and Pisa is not without a living instance of it. For my own part, I never met with any eyes I thought dangerous, but beautiful ones. As it is probable you may think I have already said more of Pisa than it deserves, I shall only add, that though the Pisans are thought to be less sociable than their neighbours, should you reside any time among them, you will find them a civil and obliging people.

LETTER XLII.

THE Baths of Pisa, four miles from the town on the road to Lucca, are pleasantly situated, and amply provided with every convenience necessary. These waters are not only used as a bath, but are also taken as a medicine. Asthmatic, paralytic, and rheumatic complaints; convulsions, giddiness, and pains in the head, they are said to cure: but when my Conductor added, they were excellent for all eruptions on the skin, I thought I must have laughed in his face;—a more perfect BARDOLPH you never saw. He put me in mind of the man, who when asked whither he was going, replied—"To cu-u-ure Sir E-E-EDWARD B——— of sta-a-a-a-ammering."

During the summer months, the Baths of Pisa are much frequented. Barren women are said to become pregnant by virtue of these waters; but

but they are thought to be most efficacious, when the husband is not of the party.

It is not unusual for ladies to receive company in the bath; nor is it disadvantageous to those who are well made. The Queen's Bath is appropriated to the Noblesse only. A Cittadina of Florence was suffered to enter by mistake while my wife was bathing. It was no sooner known than many excuses were made; and one lady in particular, who had the propriety of the place much at heart, told me—"*She was shocked at what had happened!*"—I begged her to be perfectly easy on that account, for I could assure her, Mrs. B—— had not been sensible of the difference. I thank God we belong to a country where such fooleries are unknown; and where rank has little claim to pre-eminence, unless at a procession.

Calci is a pleasant village, seven miles from Pisa, at the foot of a ridge of mountains, under whose shelter the extremes of heat and cold are seldom if ever felt: Calci, therefore, is a good summer retreat for such invalids as pass the winter at Pisa. For consumptive complaints it seems particularly well adapted: the air is excellent; the goats' milk famous; and the heat of the sun less violent than on the plain, where he reigns at least three hours longer. Another circumstance, of no small consequence, attends this

this retired spot—they keep early hours. It is a melancholy truth, that consumptive people seldom recover; whether sent to Lisbon or Naples, Nice or Pisa, few live to return. —The fault, I believe, is as often in the selfishness of the physician, as in the constitution of the patient. They keep them too long in England. They suck the orange while any juice remains, and are glad enough afterwards to get rid of the rind. When this disorder is not hereditary, and is taken in time, every thing may be expected from a favorable climate, cool rooms, early hours, exercise on horseback, milk, and vegetables. The famous TRONCHIN, in a letter I once received from him on this subject, also added—"*Soyez gai, et soyez chaste.*" TISSOT tells us, that asses' milk is heavier than cows, but more easily digested: that mares' milk comes the nearest to that of asses: that woman's milk is more nourishing than either one or the other, and of use in a decline. An English gentleman, who resided some time here, and thought by his physicians to be in the greatest danger, was perfectly recovered by it.

Though the Italians look upon consumptions to be infectious, and perhaps not entirely without reason; yet are they less scrupulous in receiving consumptive people into their houses than formerly. By an old law, when a consumptive

sumptive person died, the physician was obliged to give immediate notice to Government under a severe penalty. The house was new painted and white-washed; and every part of the furniture destroyed. The law has been repealed; but the apprehension of infection, though much diminished, is not entirely eradicated.

In the neighbourhood of Calci, admirably situated, stands the Certosa, where thirty-seven Monks, retired from the world, are building themselves a Palace.—*Sic vos non vobis vellera fertis oves.* I may be a false prophet, but considering the present state of religion in Tuscany, I cannot be thought an extravagant one.

This Order is one of the strictest after that of La Trappe; each Monk has his apartment, chapel, and garden. They dine together on particular days only, and then never speak in the refractory. No meat is suffered to enter the wall, nor is any female admitted. If you intend to dine there, let the Prior be apprised of your coming, or you will make but an indifferent dinner.

Many and various are the rides in the neighbourhood of Pisa. Follow the Condotta to its source. The fountain of ARETHUSA had not better water, nor was it by any means so pleasantly situated; yet if that famous fountain had the extraordinary quality of embellishing those who

who drank of it, it was an advantage Acciano is without, for I never saw more ugly women.

The Villa Prini is worth your seeing, were it only for the notice in the drawing-room,—"*Che non sia lecito a Chichessia pisciar sopra le Scale.*"

To Leghorn you may go by land or water. You may go post or hire a calesse, many of which are constantly in waiting at the bridge, and for ten pauls will carry you thither, and for eighteen both carry and bring you back. A procaccia sets out every day at twelve o'clock, and a boat every day at eleven. When an express has been necessary, I have sent a man on foot, who has gone thither and back in about seven hours for six pauls. The vicinity of Leghorn to Pisa is attended with many advantages to the strangers who reside there.—It is the utter ruin of the town! Mantua had not more reason to lament the vicinity of Cremona, than Pisa of Leghorn.*

To Lucca you may go post, or by Vetturino; it is also a pleasant ride on horseback. These are all the convenient excursions of a day; but

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* Mantua væ misera nimium vicina Cremonæ.

VIRGIL.

if you have time to spare, and choose to extend your steps, you should visit Massa, and the stone quarries at Carrara.

Massa is four posts from Pisa. The air is milder, and every article beyond comparison cheaper. The orange and lemon trees suffer so little from the winter, that in the month of January many were covered with ripe fruit, and still in flower. The aloes had fruited in the open air, and yet the neighbouring mountains were covered with snow. In short, you see winter, but do not feel it; and, strangers excepted, none approach a fire.

Furnished lodgings may be had for ten sequins a month, linen, &c. included. A chair costs fifteen Florence livres a month. A coach is unnecessary. A servant is paid four crowns, and keeps himself; if you keep him, he then has ten pauls only (five shillings): and I am informed, that a maid does all the work of the house and kitchen in a Massa family, besides waiting on the lady, for three livres a month (two shillings and threepence). The price of a box at the Theatre for the Carnival, is three sequins: you pay at the door six soldi florentini (about threepence English), or may be *abbonnéd* for seven pauls. The best beef is half a paul a pound; pork the same; sea-fish, six soldi; a fowl, two pauls; a capon, three; a pigeon,

pigeon, one. The Massa livre is somewhat less than half the value of the Florentine, and you will generally observe, that where the livre is small, money is scarce; and consequently a sequin at Massa, will go as far as two in Tuscany.

The best families make a figure with five hundred sequins a year. Few have that income, none exceed it. The poorest of the Nobility may have from a hundred to a hundred and fifty sequins, and no more. If you inquire how they contrive to live on so little,—I believe you will find, by selling the corn of the month of June, before the end of the Carnival. I am only answerable for the mildness of the climate; economy of living; and civility of the inhabitants. My visit being to a person who was lodged in the palace, I can give no account of the accommodation: I fear it is indifferent; but, without doubt, if two or three English families were to establish themselves at Massa, they would soon find every convenience that is necessary.

Carrara is seven miles from Massa, if you go in a carriage; if on horseback, three miles only. The quarries, the water-mills, and the *studii*,*

* Studii—shops, where the marble is worked and sold.

are worthy observation; and if you want an elegant marble chimney-piece, this is the place where you should buy it. I was particularly fortunate. Had the Arch Duchess herself given notice of her intention of visiting Carrara, and had they been prepared for her reception, she could not have seen it to greater perfection. The instant I arrived at one of the quarries, they sprung a mine; and from the quarry directly opposite a large piece of marble was detached, which rolled from the top of the mountain to the bottom, with a noise and violence tremendous indeed, but never fatal, for notice is always given, and the road kept clear of passengers.

Avenza (or Avanza) being the extremity of the ancient Luni, was once a sea-port. A deed, made in the year 1400, and still existing, mentions the Fortress of Lavenza to be within eighteen feet of the sea. It is now more than two miles distant. This Fortress, as well as that of Massa, were built by the famous CASTRUCCIO, once master of all this country.

If you go from Massa on horseback, go over the mountain, and return by the plain. You will admire the industry of the inhabitants, which has rendered even the sea sand fertile.

The inhabitants of Massa and Carrara are about twenty-two thousand. The income does not

not exceed some private fortunes in England; but is luckily in the hands of a Sovereign who does not want it, and generously lays out a considerable part in improvements.

LETTER XLIII.

THE Church of Saint Peter, on the road to Leghorn, is remarkable for its antiquity. The common people believe that Saint PETER built it; and MONTAIGNE, who visited Pisa in the year 1580, was then told, that formerly on Saint PETER's day the Bishop of Pisa came in procession to this church, and wedded the Mediterranean Sea, as the Doge of Venice does the Adriatic now: the sea was then close to the church; it has since retired at least three miles distant.

The road from hence is through a beautiful wood, enlivened in winter by the ilix and the cork tree, both evergreens; and is superior in breadth, in goodness, and in beauty, to any road I ever travelled. As you advance, the land on the left belongs to a certain BERTOLLA, who twenty years ago sold fish about the streets of Pisa, and carried them at his back;—he has lately

lately offered to purchase of the Grand Duke an estate of the trifling value of two hundred thousand crowns.—How he came by the money, though various are the conjectures, is a secret best known to himself.

The town of Leghorn is regularly, though not strongly, fortified. On the sea side, is better protected by the shallowness of the water, than by the force of its batteries; and on the other, the fortifications, though not very extensive, would require more soldiers than the Grand Duke has in all Tuscany to defend them: twelve hundred of infantry, a company of artillery, and a troop of dragoons, is the whole force of the garrison. When the Grand Duke wants soldiers, he seizes all the *discoli** he can find without exception. They are condemned to serve eight years; but, if they behave well, are discharged at the end of four. Though liable to great abuses, this method of recruiting is not unworthy the imitation of an absolute Sovereign: it spares the more useful part of his subjects; it is a security to private property; and, in some degree, may save the morals of the inhabitants from corruption.

Leghorn, which less than three centuries ago

* Discoli—young men of dissolute lives.

was a place of little consequence, is now become the richest town in Tuscany. We read, that Sarzana, a town of some note, was exchanged by COSIMO I. with the Genoese for Leghorn; at that time an inconsiderable village, inhabited by fishermen. It is the height of wisdom to be able to dive into futurity by the help of well combined probabilities.—The French General who resigned Canada to the English, said, that the time was not far off when they would repent the acquisition.—I know not whether he lived to see the completion of his prophecy; but the event has but too clearly proved the wisdom of the prophet.—TURENNE observes very justly, that it is a foolish excuse to say—"*I should not have thought it.*"—I believe, however, that Monsieur de la MARTINIERE is mistaken: Leghorn belonged originally to Pisa, and was taken by the Genoese when they gained the superiority at sea. In the year 1406 Pisa became subject to Florence; and about the year 1421, the Florentine Republic, foreseeing the utility of Leghorn, bought it of the Genoese for one hundred thousand ducats.

The Fortezza Vecchia was built by Duke ALEXANDER; and you still see that remarkable inscription—"*Sotto una Fede e Legge, e uno Signore Solo.*" COSIMO I., who succeeded to the Dukedom, drained the adjacent country at

a great

a great expence, rendered it wholesome, and first established its commerce. The new City was begun by FRANCESCO, and improved by FERDINAND. Though not a third so large as Pisa, it contains forty-seven thousand inhabitants, thirteen thousand of which are Jews. The square in the middle is magnificent, but so exceedingly out of proportion, that it looks like an immense hall in a small house.—In no other place have you room to breathe: every corner in every street is crowded, and every garret in every house is crammed;—the never-failing effects of trade and toleration.

The English at Leghorn have an established Chapel, and a place of Burial; an advantage we have not in any other Catholic country. Turks, Moors, Greeks, Armenians, Jews, and Christians, resort to this free port, are united by interest, and live amicably together. Disturbances seldom happen. An English sailor sometimes, it is true, will thrash an Italian; but he treats him afterwards, and, to do him justice, is always as ready to do the one, as the other.

A place of trade, where every one is more intent on getting money, than on spending it, cannot be supposed to abound in palaces, pictures, or statues: nor are there many public buildings at Leghorn that merit the observation

of a stranger. At the palace of the Governor, civility requires (unless your stay be short), that you should write your name. Your own Consul, and the English Clergyman, you will visit or not, as you think fit; or as your occasions may require.

The harbour is full of ships of every nation, except its own. The Grand Duke had formerly three frigates, and many galleys: he has not at present one vessel of force remaining to defend his coasts. Large ships are much exposed in this road during the winter months. Spezia Bay, about twenty leagues distant, is one of the finest harbours in the world.

The Leghorn trade with England, besides the various commodities of the Levant, consists of marbles, silk, wine, oil, anchovies, &c., the produce of Tuscany; and receive in return salt-fish, hardware, woollen cloths, Manchester stuffs, Staffordshire ware, tin, &c.: in short, there is scarcely any thing of English manufactury, that is not to be had at Leghorn. The only manufacture of the country, is that of coral: it is in the hands of the Jews, and employs a great number of people to sort it, cut it, round it, pierce it, polish it, and string it. The best is brought from the coast of Africa; and the highest coloured is most esteemed. It is sent all

over

over the world, particularly into Asia; and is chiefly used for necklaces, bracelets, and other female ornaments.

All payments are made in *pezzi*—an imaginary coin, like the pound sterling, which never had existence. The Exchange was once a Chapel. The Magazines for oil, salt, and tobacco; the Mole, Arsenal, Fortezza Vecchia, and Fortino; the Greek Church, and Jews' Synagogue; the English and Dutch Burial-places; are all objects worthy your curiosity: nor should the Campo Santo of the Tuscans be omitted—where the proud patrician, and the poor peasant; the fair virgin, and the disordered prostitute, lie equally undistinguished:—where more bodies than one are crammed into the same hole:—where the most inveterate enemies are thus made to embrace:—and where husbands and wives, who lived separately during their lives, are compelled at last to lay most lovingly together.—A rare lesson of humility!

If you have time to spare, visit also the Chapel at Monte Nero, four miles distant from the town. A *calesse* (they are continually in waiting, like hackney-coaches in England) will carry you thither, and bring you back, for five pauls. You will have an extensive view of the Mediterranean and country round Leghorn; but you should

should be told, that you have a very steep hill to climb, for the calesses stop short at a house in the bottom.

The Shop of MICALI is an object of curiosity: there is scarcely any commodity it does not furnish. Lord B—— bought a service of China at one end of the shop, while his son tried on a pair of English leather breeches at the other. See it by all means, but be cautious what you buy.—MICALI has the vice of his countrymen, constantly asks more than he will take, and will cheat you if he can.

The price of every article of consumption being in proportion to the demand, you will conclude there is nothing cheap in a town so populous and so rich. Families who make a tolerable figure at Pisa, would be puzzled how to live at Leghorn. The adjacent country does not supply necessaries for its own subsistence. Corn, wine, oil, and cattle, come from afar; and the very water, such as is fit to drink, is fetched from Pisa.

The Casino is not confined to the Noblesse only; nor are there more than four or five noble families in the town. The Theatre is larger than that at Pisa, and the Operas are better. The public walk is on the ramparts. The Corso is in the principal street; and, although the

the inhabitants are so numerous, thirty coaches only are kept; while the deserted and miserable Pisa has at least double that number.

I know not what to say of the inhabitants, they are such a motley crew. The men, I have already told you, are of all nations. The women, like those of Genoa, wear long figured cloaks of linen that cover their heads, and reach below their waists; they are convenient, not unbecoming, and, when they choose it, have all the advantages of concealment.* We are told, in an English newspaper—"*Prostitution, in a short time, will be as completely rooted out at Leghorn, as it is already out of every other part of Tuscany.*"—And what then! Does the gentleman think morality will be a gainer? I have always observed the morals least corrupted,—domestic happiness least interrupted,—where common women are tolerated; and, though I may admire the excessive purity of the legislator, I cannot commend that policy which is studious to prevent small crimes, and encourages great ones.—Common women, as soon as known, are sent out of the state: and adultery is not only tolerated, but countenanced and encouraged,—

* The Mezzaro, as it is called, is used by the women in many other towns of Italy, but is of black silk.

a prin-

a principle which appears to me as strange as if the robber were to be hanged; and he who *both robs and murders*, to be pardoned and rewarded.

The town of Leghorn is not deficient in accommodation for travellers. Imposition I apprehend to be nearly the same every where: you must bargain for your rooms; and they can afford to supply your table for six pauls a head. Few take private lodgings; in two days they satisfy their curiosity; nor are they inclined to stay longer in a place where every one is busy, and they only are unemployed. From hence you may embark for Genoa; eight sequins is the usual price of a felucca; it carries your coach, and is entirely at your disposal. You are a night and a day at sea; or you may go to Lerici, which is seven posts from Pisa, and embarking there, may arrive at Genoa in eight hours.

Leghorn is more famous for rich than for learned men. Arithmetic is more studied than the Graces; and the Belles Lettres the Livornese are most conversant in, are Letters of Exchange: in short, in every respect it is better calculated for business than amusement.

LETTER XLIV.

LUCCA is the capital of a little Republic, containing, at most, one hundred and twenty-five thousand people, who, by extraordinary good fortune, have preserved their liberties in the midst of despotism. Here POMPEY, CÆSAR, and CRASSUS met to settle some differences of their own, and formed that plan which afterwards overset the liberties of Rome. Another remarkable circumstance attends this Republic:—not less than two hundred years have elapsed since it saw the face of an enemy.—VOLTAIRE, therefore, had good reason to say: "*Sa Foiblesse la garde; et Lucque est plus tranquille que Dresde, et que Berlin.*"

Surrounded by mountains which, during the winter months are covered with snow, the climate of Lucca is considerably colder than that of

of Pisa. The soil is good, and well cultivated, but the produce of wheat is not equal to the consumption. As a remedy to this defect, the ovens are all in the hands of Government. Three years provision is kept constantly in store; and bread is sold nearly at the same price all the year round. A monopoly like this is good policy. The gain, if there be any, thus becomes of more general advantage; and the loss, when it happens, is not felt by the public. I wish, by the bye, their Excellencies were better bakers.

The town is fortified, and has three gates; over each, proud of its peculiar privilege, is written in capitals, *Libertas*. Yet Denmark created the most absolute of Monarchies, to free herself from the tyranny of a Senate; and Rome is said to have been happier under the worst of its Emperors, than during the last sixty years of the Commonwealth. Though not above two miles in circumference, Lucca contains near twenty thousand inhabitants. The garrison consists of six hundred men only, but a militia of twenty thousand can be assembled at a short notice, by signals appointed for that purpose. The low situation of the town and country might encourage an attempt to drown them with their own river, and the enemy might again succeed as ill as in the time of FORTEBRACCIO.

Lucca does not furnish large squares, wide streets,

streets, or magnificent palaces.* The circumference of the ancient Amphitheatre, part of which still remains, is the best proof of her former grandeur. The Churches are indifferently furnished with pictures. In the arsenal are arms for thirty thousand men: they are kept clean, and are well arranged, but I had no other satisfaction in viewing those instruments of destruction, than that of thinking they were never likely to be employed. They shew you the Saddle and Arms of the famous CASTRUCCIO CASTRACANI, who, MACCHIAVEL tells us, died at the same age as PHILIP of MACEDON and SCIPIO (forty-four), and adds—"*Would have been superior to them both, had he had the powers of Macedon and Rome, instead of those of Lucca.*"

The Cathedral, the outside of which is truly Gothic, contains little within worth seeing, unless it be the Volto Santo, which we are not permitted to see. My Conductor assured me, that a Bishop who insisted upon having it uncovered, was struck blind for his temerity. After such a declaration, you may judge if I had any curi-

* One of the principal streets not being wide enough for two carriages to pass, a ring is fixed in the center, and when two obstinate coachmen meet, he who arrives there last is obliged to return as he came.

osity left. The Volto Santo is the Image of our SAVIOUR upon the Cross, carved in wood. It is uncovered on three days in the year only.—The first Sunday after Easter, the third of May, and the fourteenth of September. Like another Saint RANIERI, it never fails to relieve all the wants of its supplicants; but it is also thought that the Lucchese are discreet, and never ask but when they are certain to obtain.

The Government is Aristocratical. The Legislative power is in the hands of a Senate. One hundred Senators must be present to form a Council; and two-thirds must be in favor of any question that is carried. Every Noble is entitled to vote at the age of twenty-five years, but such as have purchased their Nobility are not eligible to the office of Anziani.

The Executive Power is composed of a Gonfaloniere, and nine Anziani, who together govern the Republic. They reside in the palace; each has two rooms allotted him; and they all dine together. The Gonfaloniere has some particular privileges; he is the Prince of the Republic; he can propose to the Senate any question he pleases; and has the title of Eccellenza: the Anziani have only that of Illustrissimo, except when two are together, they then are Eccellenza also.—We know that two negatives make an affirmative; but that two Illustrissimo's should make

make an Eccellenza, is very extraordinary.—Though honorable, the office of Anziani has its inconvenience: they are constantly employed at the palace all the morning: they take the direction by turns three days each: and during the whole time they reside in the palace, cannot go out but in a coach; cannot enter a coffee-house, nor mix publicly with the people. Each is allowed five sequins a day for his expences, nor has he any other salary. The reign of these Sovereigns is short; two months see the end of it; and lest this should not be sufficient to convince them of the instability of all worldly grandeur, on the fourteenth of September, when the customary flax is burnt before the Bishop, they are then told—"*Sic transit gloria mundi.*"

Once in two years, in the month of June, one hundred and twenty of the Senate are chosen by ballot to fill the above mentioned offices. It is a time of great festivity. Many particularities attend this ceremony that render it worthy the observation of a stranger. The dresses of the Gonfaloniere, Anziani, and Council; their manner of voting; the assembly of all the Noblesse of Lucca, men and women; the orations, music, and different suppers of Anziani, Electors, Friars, and Secretaries;—all is uncommon; and the ladies who stand behind the chairs of the gentlemen while they sup, give a grotesque

tesque appearance to the scene not easy to be imagined. These gentlemen, to give them their due, seemed to feel all the awkwardness of a situation rendered indispensable, and were more assiduous in supplying the wants of the ladies near them, than their own. I am told, it is otherwise in a country that shall be nameless;—there, without any *indispensable necessity*, the gentlemen take the best places at supper, and will sit contentedly on their broad bottoms, while ladies, fainting with heat, and sinking with fatigue, cannot find a vacant place, or a chair to sit down upon:—if this be true, it is not only uncivil and ill-bred, but savage in the extreme; nor is it to be met with in any other civilized country in Europe. But to return to Lucca. Each night forty Anziani are chosen; but their turns of service are determined afterwards by lot: nor does any one of them know who is to be his successor till he is chosen. A ridiculous circumstance happened at the last election. An English gentleman, with whom I was in company, newly arrived from India, fell by accident into the procession of the electors, without knowing what they were going about; and seeing those who were before him put their hands into a box, he fancied it was the poor-box, and, had he not been prevented, would have put in a paul. This mistake occasioned some confusion.

Luckily

Luckily it was attributed to its right cause, and laughed at exceedingly.

A Podesta, and four Auditors, try all causes, civil and criminal: they must be foreigners. Forty Sbirri patrole the streets every night; and two men on the tower of the palace are constantly on the watch, to give an alarm in case of fire;—an excellent regulation, and no where so much wanted as in London. Punishment is more frequent here than in Tuscany. Criminals are sent to the galleys at Venice for eight or ten years, from whence they seldom return.

The revenue of the Republic is small, so are its expences. The former does not exceed one hundred and ten thousand sequins, and yet is more than equal to the expenditure.

We read, that in the year 1314, Lucca alone enjoyed the lucrative monopoly of silk; it was afterwards spread by degrees all over Europe. Silk and oil still form the principal part of her commerce. From the oil alone the Lucchese are said to receive one hundred and fifty thousand sequins annually; a produce that makes ample amends for the twenty thousand sequins they are supposed to lay out in wheat. Silk, linen cloth, wax, and glass, are the chief manufactures. The markets are well supplied, and the veal is famous. The Noblesse are polite and courteous to strangers; Jews only excepted, who

who are suffered to remain in the town three days only. The Lucchese always wear black, men and women: it gives a gloomy cast to every assembly, and many an ordinary-looking gentleman may be taken for an undertaker. Swords are not allowed to be worn, except by officers. The clocks go "*all' Italiana:*" they also strike every quarter of an hour; a circumstance particularly unpleasant to those who do not understand them.

The Lucchese Nobility are rich. It is easily accounted for. When the Pisans want money, which often happens, Government having little to do with theirs, lend it to one of their own body at three per cent., who places it at Pisa at five:—a clear gain of two per cent. to the latter, and three to the State. This is the usual gain of the Lucchese Gentlemen on money; but when they buy corn and oil, their profit is seldom less than ten times as much.

The Lucchese are better husbandmen than the Pisans. The very opinion that they are free, renders them industrious. Their hay is excellent:—they spread it as soon as it is cut; and for my own use, I would prefer one load of Lucca hay to all that the Grand Duke has. In this country when their hay is dry, they carry it, though it be on a Sunday. The common people in England would think it the height of impiety

were

were they called from the alehouse on such an occasion. The Jews are even more rigid observers of the Sabbath than we are. A certain Rabbi called SOLOMON, falling into a deep ditch on the Sabbath day, would not suffer any one to pull him out, saying, "*Sabbatha sancta colo, de stercore sergere nolo.*" He was made to remain there the next day also, the Christians then saying, "*Sabbatha nostra quidem* SOLOMON *celebrabis ibidem.*"

The Corso is on the ramparts; it is also the only walk the Lucchese have. The fourteenth of September, the festival of the *Santa Croce,* is the most favorable time to visit Lucca; or should you be in that neighbourhood in the spring, remember the first Sunday after Easter is another great festival—*La Festa della Libertá.* At other times a stranger can expect but little amusement in a place where there are seldom public diversions. Even the Casino is not visited by the women, consequently is little frequented by the men. It was at Lucca that Monsieur DUPATY, speaking of the French Literature, tells us, "*That though the Italians admire and prefer it to every other, they have not sense enough to comprehend one half of its beauties.—That the art of fine Writing is confined to France.*" Here let me stop, for I am sorry to say any thing to the disadvantage of an Author who, in his Let-

ters from Nice, speaks so advantageously of my better half.

Fifteen miles from the town are the Lucca Baths. They are said to have nearly the same virtue as those of Pisa. For situation and accommodation, coolness only excepted, the latter are preferable. Travellers that go thither are obliged to take horses from the post, unless they use their own.

See the beautiful villas Santini and Manzi; and while you admire, agree with me, that pleasures of this kind are not always without their inconvenience. SAMUEL JOHNSON, after having passed some pleasant hours with his friend GARRICK, at his beautiful villa at Hampton, clapping him on the shoulder, said—" These, DAVID, these are the things that make *a death-bed horrible.*"

The best inn is the Pantera. You must make your bargain before-hand lest, as it is not often they see a stranger, they should make too much of you. A Foreign Embassador, travelling in England, was charged most exorbitantly for a boiled chicken.—" Sure," said he, to the landlord, " Chickens are scarce in England."—" No, please your Excellency," replied the landlord, " *It is Embassadors that are scarce.*"

LETTER XLV.

THE town of Siena is built on the summit of a hill. The purity and freshness of the air, and peculiar exemption from gnats, render it during the summer months the most desirable spot in Italy. Its origin is unknown. Its antiquity is certain: Sena Julia was a Roman colony in the time of AUGUSTUS. Liberty, that mountain nymph, was ever dear to this lively people: they signalized their bravery in many successful engagements with the Florentines and Pisans; and, at the present moment, might not belong to the former of those states, if they had not, like the latter, first fallen out among themselves. A writer of those times, a famous warrior (MONLUC), says, that he never saw a Siena man frightened in his life; and would rather undertake to defend Siena with Siena women only, than Rome with the Romans that then inhabited it. This gentleman ex-

presses himself perhaps too warmly; but it is well known, that, in more than one instance, the Siena women have given proofs of the most determined and most heroic valor.

Siena suffered long under the Spanish yoke, and when relieved, had only to choose the chains she thought the lightest—Spanish, French, or German. Miserable alternative! the loss of liberty is always fatal. The year 1557 put an entire finish to the freedom of Siena; since which period trade has gradually decreased, a general languor has pervaded the whole country, and a city, whose streets in the thirteenth century, were crowded with merchants and artists, and said to have contained one hundred thousand inhabitants, at present scarcely contains a sixth part of that number.

Siena is five posts from Florence, and eighteen and a half from Rome; is irregularly built, and has every disadvantage that extreme inequality of ground can possibly occasion. Many streets are inaccessible to coaches. The pavement, which, as well as the houses, is chiefly of brick, is in every part execrable. The town is about six miles in circumference, is surrounded with a high wall, in tolerable repair, but not fortified. The Florentine and Roman gates are opened at any hour. You may always get in, but when once they are shut, you cannot get

out

out without leave from the Governor. In the year 1301 there were thirty-nine gates; they are very properly reduced to seven. The number of towers was not less extraordinary; they were erected by the Nobles, in the time of the Republic, as a security against the people, and afterwards became a symbol of nobility. Few are now remaining, either at Siena or Pisa. It was wise to take them down, lest in length of time their enormous weight should destroy the edifices they were intended to defend.

Siena, though ancient, has little remains of antiquity; nor is it much indebted to modern architecture. Few are its palaces. The public edifices are none of them extraordinary; and the Duomo, with few exceptions, is the only church worthy the notice of a stranger. This magnificent Gothic pile, of black and white marble, was built in the thirteenth century. The original plan was more extensive, but left unfinished. The profusion of ornaments in the front of the cathedral was, without doubt, the admiration of that age, as it is the wonder of this. The Mosaic of the floor, invented and begun by Duccio in 1350, was improved and finished by Beccafumi in 1500, who made use of yellow marble as a mezzotinto. Some of the heads are executed in a style that would not disgrace the drawings of the best masters. Among the busts

of

of the Popes, which are continued to ADRIAN the Fourth, you may look in vain for Pope JOAN: I conclude the whole to be a fiction, and that no such Pope ever existed. The Pulpit, by NICCOLO PISANO, is better executed than that of Pisa. The Pictures are none of them extraordinary: the Madonna was painted, they tell you, by Saint LUKE. The Siennese having invoked the aid of this Madonna when hard pressed by the Florentines in the year 1260, and gaining a complete victory, generously gave their persons and their city to her for ever. The Paintings in the Library are by PINTORICCIO; the designs by RAPHAEL. The antique group of the Graces, though mutilated, has been much admired. The right hand of Saint JOHN, a valuable relic, is safely locked up in this church, under three keys, in the keeping of three different persons, the Capitano del Popolo, the Archbishop, and the Rector. It is exposed to the populace every year, the first day after Pentecost: and is thus guarded lest the Florentines should run away with it,—they have already got one of his fingers.

Siena contains several good pictures of the old Masters. GUIDO DI SIENA was the first painter at the restoration of the arts in Italy; CIMABUE, the Florentine, was not born till near twenty years after. In the Dominican Convent

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is the Madonna of GUIDO, painted in 1221, and has the following voucher:

Me Guido de Senis diebus pinxit Amœnis,
Quem Christus lenis nullis velit agere pœnis.
A. D. MCCXXI.

In the same church is the martyrdom of San DOMINICANO, by CIMABUE. Observe the three Sybils at the Duomo Vecchio, painted on the wall by BALDASSARE PERUZZI. They tell you the Grand Duke would have removed them to Florence if he could. At San Francesco are several pictures by CIMABUE, CALABRESI, PIETRO PERUGINO, and BECCAFUMI. At San Quirico, by CASSOLANI and VANNI. At the Agostiniani, by PIETRO PERUGINO and SODOMO.

At Santa Maria in Provinciano, is a Madonna in stone. This, as far as I can find, is the Madonna *á la mode*. I asked my Conductor, if she performed greater miracles than the lady at the Duomo: he replied—"*Uguale!*"—I inquired no further. There are many other churches and convents, and three conservatorios for the education of young women; one for the noblesse, and two for the citizens.

Enter the door of the Hospital for the sake of the view. On one side the ground is level, on the other is a precipice that will surprise you.

This

This building may serve as a specimen of the strange inequality of ground on which Siena stands; and you may satisfy your curiosity without danger to your health, or prejudice to your feelings: should you fear infection, wet your nostrils with vinegar and camphor, or with that of the four thieves. This Hospital is admirably placed, having a large square on one side, and an open country on the other. Men, women, and children are admitted; all disorders, and all accidents, are treated: women in labor, and foundlings, have also apartments allotted to them. In the Chapel is a famous picture by the Chevalier Conca. If you are not acquainted with the rules of perspective, the pillars will surprise you—they become crooked as you approach them.

Neither the Palace of the Grand Duke, nor of the Archbishop, contain any thing extraordinary. In the Palazzo della Signoria is a good picture by Luca Giordano; and several by Beccafumi and Sodomo, both Sienese. From the Tower you have an extensive view of the country, and from thence only can you form an idea of the City. The prisons are immediately under the Theatre.—Is the music a prisoner thus hears an increase of punishment, or mitigation of his sufferings? At any rate, it is a very unnatural connexion. The Casino was formerly

merly a church,—another connexion not less extraordinary. The Piazza has the appearance of a great scollop shell, and has a wonderfully good effect when full of people. The water that the fountain supplies is of a bad quality, and supposed to occasion disorders in the bladder; on which account most of the houses have wells, and use rain water. Another fountain, called Fonte Blanda, is much celebrated: whether this ancient fountain be that which DANTE mentions in his Thirtieth Canto, or not; whether it should be written Fonte Blanda, or Fonte Branda, is a matter of little consequence either to you or me,—take care how you taste of its stream, lest it give you a share of that extravagance of which the Sienese are so generally accused.

Not far distant is the house of SOCINI, uncle and nephew, heads of a sect of Deists, who dispute the DIVINITY, and deny the mysteries of CHRIST. At the death of the present inhabitant, that family will be extinct:—better would it be had it never existed.

Another Siena Gentleman, a *Monsignore* (Bishop), has rendered himself famous by sentiments directly opposite. He has just published a Treatise on Divine Grace, not very intelligible. I will mention a few of its tenets.

This Gentleman begins by saying,—" It would

would not properly be a Grace if it were preceded by Merit." He then tells us, "That without this Grace all are inevitably damned, though in every other respect they may be perfect, and want only that to become Saints.

"That JESUS CHRIST bestows this Grace on one, and refuses it to another; nor can man, by any act of his, ever merit it, prevent it, augment it, or preserve it.

"That God, in bestowing this Grace, makes no distinction, and often chuses the most wicked to give it to them.

"That, except in the Catholic Church, there is neither Grace nor Life.

"That love of your Country, Parents, Friends; your Duty in every situation; Equity, Justice, Benevolence, Temperance, Prudence, are nothing without Grace.

"That a good Character, Justice, Equity, Sincerity, Candour, Tenderness, Affection, Compassion, are of no use whatever to the person who has them, without the Grace of JESUS CHRIST; they not only are insufficient to save him, but may become causes of his damnation."

The Bishop tells us, "That the Deity, in order to certify the necessity of Grace, has not scrupled to sacrifice, for four thousand years, almost all the inhabitants of the earth, till the coming

ing of JESUS CHRIST." One might ask, what is become of NOAH, JOB, and other good men before the law; and of MOSES, DAVID, and other good men after it?

If you believe the Jansenists, you can do nothing to save yourself.—Not only can do no good action, but cannot even form the wish to do it; but they give you this comfort, that, if one of the Elect, you cannot be damned. That he who does not fear GOD, nor love his neighbour, if it pleases GOD to give him one of these strong Graces, all his wickedness shall not be sufficient to prevent their good effects. He may become a sinner, but cannot remain so till death, because he is of the Elect. Far be it from me to dispute the Omnipotency of the CREATOR; but I am astonished at the Doctrine of the Bishop, who is thus a Comforter of Sinners, and Encourager to Sin!

LETTER XLVI.

THE Lizza is a pleasant walk, planted with trees, where every evening in summer, a great number of contented people assemble, chiefly in pairs, to enjoy a freshness of air unknown in any other part of Italy. At the entrance of the Fortezza you read the following inscription:

A. Cosimo. Mediceo.
ad. imperii. Securitatem. fundatam.
A.CIↃ.IↃ.LXI.
Petrus. Leopoldus. Aust.
Spectata. Senensium. fide.
ad. Delicias. vertit.
A.CIↃ.IↃCC.LXXVIII.
Sinenses, ben. ociamini et plaudite.

The inscription is a kind one, and, taken literally, does not deserve an ill-natured comment. Pallone, a favorite game of the Italians, is played every evening under the walls of the fortress.

The

The exercise is violent, and very unequally distributed. This game affords but little amusement to the lookers on, unless it be excellently played. I fancy it to be the same game that was in use in ancient Rome. In one of the Casemates are kept tame rabbits. I had frequently looked down on them in my walks, and one day, seeing their backs without any covering, I concluded dry meat had given them the mange; upon inquiry, I find they pluck them every two months, and make gloves and stockings of the fur. The Lizza and Fortezza thus united, make an extensive walk.—I long to give a fête to the Sienese on this delightful spot. The walks might be illuminated at a small expence; a firework played off in the center; music disposed in different parts to keep up a continual harmony; a coffee-house opened in the Fortezza to supply refreshments;—and then an Epicure like you, with his mistress in one hand, and a nosegay in the other, might enjoy all his senses at once.

The Manege is well situated on the Lizza. The number of horses is not in proportion to the number of scholars.—Cruel and mistaken economy!—The scholars are dissatisfied; and this generous and noble animal shortly becomes a victim to his own spirit and docility.

For want of other exercise, I ride constantly

in

in the Manege.—You who are scampering over hedges and ditches, will hold this amusement cheap; but, my good Sir, I have no other. Let me then make the most of it, and for once entreat you to spare your wonted severities on an art that in every country in Europe, except our own, is in high estimation. I agree with you, that a dressed horse requires a skilful person to manage him: he is used to a weight that he bears less unwillingly, owing to its firmness: he is also accustomed to particular aids, to which he has learned a ready obedience. Put a man on his back whose body has not acquired the equilibrium of the manege seat; let him bend him one way, when he means he should go the other; let the aid of his leg be in opposition to that of his hand; and I make no doubt the sagacious animal will resist, and endeavour to avail himself of the unsteadiness and unskilfulness of his rider. I also agree with you, that a woman's horse may easily be taught too much, and may acquire some tricks and *gentilesses* in the Manege that he had better be without. If he be bitted, and taught to canter on the right leg only, it is as much as is necessary; he will then be light in hand, and, having been worked on a small circle, will be more obedient, have his haunches more under him, and be less liable to stumble than another horse.

It is also in the Manege that horses are best taught to stand fire; to bear the beat of drums; display of colours, &c.; without which they are useless to military men, and sometimes dangerous to others. You may have seen, perhaps, these curious lines:

" Les chevaux la plus part sont fougueux lorsque
on tire,
L'un saute, l'autre rue; et, ce qu' est bien pire,
Il Jette quelque fois á terre un Cavalier."

Besides the advantages already mentioned, do you reckon as nothing the exercise you may take in all weathers. Health and long life depend, I believe, on regularity. The fatigue of to-day does not make amends for the indolence of yesterday. It is constant and regular exercise that preserves the machine from injury, and enables it to perform with ease its separate functions, till all its parts decay gradually together. I have known many Ecuyers all healthy and long lived. You know Sir SYDNEY MEADOWS; that Gentleman, if I am rightly informed, was born in the year One, and I know not how you will account for the extraordinary vigour he at present enjoys, if not by the regular exercise he has constantly taken. Having said thus much, candour obliges me to confess, that a perfect Manege Horse is only fit for the Manege; even the supple-

suppleness and agility he acquires there, render him dangerous out of it. I had occasion to put my servant the other day on a horse he was no longer able to ride; he assured me the Manege had spoiled him; and that he walked on his hind legs like a dancing bear.

The Corso is out of the Porta Cormolia. It is usual to return to the Lizza, where some get out and walk.—You who, on a windy day, I have often seen, with a curious and eager eye, take the exact dimensions of a woman's foot, will probably not find one to admire here.—In my reckoning it is of little consequence, since, if a beauty, it is seldom seen; and if a defect, is easily concealed. The Italians, at any rate, have one advantage over the Chinese, which you will allow makes them some amends;—they can walk: and no women in Italy make better use of their legs than the women of Siena; they consequently look healthier and handsomer than in other places. Beauty however here, as well as elsewhere, is most conspicuous in the people of middle rank, who, living between the extremes of want and luxury, fatigue and indolence, lead the kind of life best adapted to our natures, and most conducive to health and comeliness. Paul Giovio tells us, that in his time the Siena women were the handsomest in Italy.

Though I disregard a little foot, for the

reasons

reasons I have just given, I know no country where a pretty hand is so necessary as in Italy: a well-bred Italian, when he enters or leaves a room, seldom fails to kiss the hand of the lady he visits. Mrs. —— has a beautiful hand, and little foot; one of her admirers has just told me, there is no part of a woman he likes so well:— of such sentiments one cannot be jealous; and I hope, if ever he is fool enough to tell her so, that she will requite him with a slap in the face, and a kick in the breech.

Situated as we are at Siena, on a high mountain, superior to most of those which surround it, it is curious to think that the height of Turin is little inferior. La Lande makes only twenty toises difference between the second floor of the Hotel d'Angleterre at Turin, and that of the Three Kings at Siena. But you descend from the Alps to the one, and on every side ascend to the other.

The best inns are the Sun and the Three Kings. None are open after ten o'clock at night, except to Travellers, nor is it permitted the Sienese to be hungry after that hour. Those who stay any time at Siena take lodgings. A coach costs ten pauls a day, *buona mano* included; you cannot have one for the evening only as at Pisa. Chairs are to be had, but men generally walk on foot.

Having praised the milk and butter of Pisa, it may be necessary to acquaint an Englishman that Siena is very ill supplied with both. I am indifferent about the latter: since it is bad, I conclude we shall eat less, and consequently be healthier. I have no objection to a piece of butter in warm water as an emetic, but nothing, I think, could induce me to eat half the quantity you do every morning for your breakfast: it would make me either as sick as a dog, or as fat as a pig.

A Lady of this town, La Signora ——, is ordered to drink asses milk, and, being too weak to take any physic, they have physiced the ass.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.